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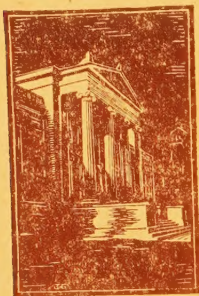
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Worship training for juniors



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WORSHIP TRAINING FOR JUNIORS

By
JOSEPHINE L. BALDWIN

A Textbook in the Standard Course in Teacher
Training, outlined and approved by the International
Council of Religious Education

SPECIALIZATION SERIES

Printed for
THE TEACHER TRAINING PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION
by
THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN

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TO THE TEACHERS AND PUPILS
IN THE JUNIOR DEPARTMENT OF
OLD ST. PAUL'S CHURCH
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY
AND IN MEMORY OF OUR
WORSHIP TOGETHER, THIS BOOK
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

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Hagstrom 90 etc.

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SPECIALIZATION COURSES FOR TEACHERS OF BEGINNERS, PRIMARY AND JUNIOR CHILDREN

Conforming to the Standard Approved by the
International Council of Religious Education

FOR TEACHERS OF BEGINNERS:

A Study of the Little Child, Mary T. Whitley.

Story-Telling for Teachers of Beginners and Primary Children,
Katharine D. Cather.

Methods with Beginners, Frances W. Danielson.

FOR TEACHERS OF PRIMARY CHILDREN:

A Study of the Primary Child, Mary T. Whitley.

Story-Telling for Teachers of Beginners and Primary Children,
Katherine D. Cather.

Methods for Primary Teachers, Hazel Lewis.

FOR TEACHERS OF JUNIORS:

A Study of the Junior Child, Mary T. Whitley.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

THE series of textbooks of which **WORSHIP TRAINING FOR JUNIORS** is a unit has been planned and issued to meet the special requirements of the Standard Training Course. This course is organized on the basis of twelve textbook units of not less than ten lessons each. Of the twelve units required for the standard training diploma, eight are general units and four are specialization units. Of the four specialization units, three are required and one is elective. Specialization depends upon the department of the church school in which the teacher or officer is engaged in service. **WORSHIP TRAINING FOR JUNIORS** is in the field of Junior Department specialization. Of the four specialization units, three are required and one is elective. This textbook is one of the elective units.

The textbooks of the Specialization Series are prepared under the supervision of the Editorial and Educational Committee representing some sixteen evangelical denominations that co-operate in the Teacher Training Publishing Association. Editors, education secretaries, and publishers of these denominations through this medium of co-operation produce the textbooks of the Specialization Series for common use in the various denominational and interdenominational agencies of training. Textbook writers are chosen on the basis of experience and training in the fields of specialization service of which the respective textbooks

treat. The author of **WORSHIP TRAINING FOR JUNIORS** is widely known as a specialist in work with junior children. The name of Josephine L. Baldwin is familiar wherever graded church schools exist. In institutes, training schools, and conventions she has had personal contact with thousands of junior workers. Her writings have made her name known to other thousands who have not had the privilege of personal acquaintance. This latest contribution from her pen needs no editorial indorsement to commend it to workers with children throughout the world. It will be found adapted not only to use as a textbook, but for reading and general reference on the important subject of children's worship.

For the Teacher Training Publishing Association,
WADE CRAWFORD BARCLAY,
Chairman, Editorial and Educational Committee.
Chicago, Illinois, April, 1927.

CHAPTER I

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WORSHIP AND ITS VALUE IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

FORE-EXERCISE

RECALL special times in your life when you have had memorable worship experiences either alone or as one of a group.

Have you ever been kept from attending the church service for any considerable length of time by illness or for any other cause? If so, have you had anything like the feeling described in Psalm 84. 2, 4, 10? What was it that you missed and longed for?

If you are a teacher, have there ever been times when in your class work a worshipful spirit has taken possession of the class? How did you meet the need of the group at that time?

WAYS IN WHICH WORSHIP FINDS EXPRESSION

Worship a Universal Experience. The testimony of explorers and missionaries alike shows that people everywhere have felt the call of God in their souls and have tried to answer the call through some form of worship. Most savages live in a world peopled with evil spirits whom they worship, not because of any feeling of sympathy with them or admiration for them, but to appease their wrath. There seems to be among all people a recognition of the fact that life is the most precious thing in the world, and this has

led among many races to the offering of human sacrifices in worship. Others inflict injuries upon themselves as did the Baal worshipers of old, to attract the attention of their deity. Often the worship has such degrading features that it is difficult to realize that it is an attempt to seek after God. But it is true of all of God's children, whether they lie upon beds of spikes, turn prayer wheels, or offer psalms and songs and prayers of the purest spiritual content, that they are seeking God "if haply they might feel after him and find him."¹ The roads they take are not the same, but the fact that they all take some road is a proof that the instinct for God dwells in the souls of men everywhere.

The Necessity for Training. The prayer of savages rarely rises above material needs and desires. A people whose worship is base and sensual cannot attain to the highest intellectual and spiritual eminence, and one whose religion is a religion of fear must remain uncivilized and unprogressive since fear inhibits rather than encourages action. The magic of medicine men, fetishes, and other forms of superstition are holding countless thousands enthralled to-day, and they cannot escape until the form of their religion and its expression in worship are changed.

The world has been entranced by the perfection of the works of art produced in ancient Greece. Her buildings are still marvels of architectural beauty and in the world of letters she was pre-eminent in her day. It is certainly something more than a coincidence that her worship had in it none of the cringing fear and abject servility so common in other reli-

¹ Acts 17. 27.

gions. The Greeks approached their deity as one doing reverence to a great king in the heavenly realm.

The desires of the heart as revealed through prayer day after day are an infallible indication of character. Many professing Christians never rise very far above the savage who prays only for things. There are hosts of people who regard God as one might a foreign correspondent to be called upon in time of trouble. Some will even ask for help in the commission of a crime. But a multitude of sincere worshipers are seeking above all else the highest spiritual good for themselves and for others.

Out of this wide range of manifestations two facts stand out clearly. One is that the universal social need implies the need of the individual for communion with God. This is shown definitely in the fact that everyone who has not deliberately denied the appeal of the Spirit turns to God in some form of worship, especially when in sudden trouble or distress. The second is that while the impulse to worship is inborn, appropriate methods of expression are not instinctive. The first shows that when we are training children in worship we are not forcing upon them something for which they have no taste, but are working in line with a God-given tendency. The second reveals the need for suggestion and guidance that the desire for communion with God may find fitting expression and so develop the religious life in a normal way to a higher and higher plane.

WORSHIP—SUBJECTIVE OR OBJECTIVE

The Function of Worship. It is exceedingly difficult to find or to formulate a satisfactory definition

of worship. In fact, one recent writer on the subject has asserted that it is impossible of definition. "It should be remembered that any definition that could be offered would be meaningless apart from the system of experience and thought of which it is the deposit. This is true of all definitions and specially of the definition of worship. To try to capture the life of it in a phrase is a bolder venture than is wise."²

The members of a psychology class in a theological seminary, while considering the subject of worship, were asked to write a definition, and the following was considered by the group to be the best of the twenty-five submitted:

"Worship is an expression of the religious state of mind. It serves to cultivate in the individual the appreciation of objects which in its best moments society has come to regard as of the highest value. It is the direct communion of the soul with its Maker, in devotion, thanksgiving, and prayer. Worship includes the fellowship of both God and men, by bringing together minds of like ideals and common interests, in the presence of a socialized God. Worship provides a larger social fellowship including fellowship with the Divine Being."

Whatever definition might be attempted, one must first decide for himself whether in his opinion worship is objective or subjective—an end in itself or a means to the attainment of some end beyond itself. Dean Sperry, in his book on *Reality in Worship*, to which frequent reference will be made in these pages,

² *Religious Values*, Edgar Sheffield Brightman. The Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

has based his thesis on the theory that in worship we achieve one of the major ends of human life and that it is not an act which has value because of what it induces. It is taken for granted here that worship is both a means and an end. It makes it possible for the child to enter into what Dean Sperry calls "an artistic recapitulation of Christian experience," and find in the service an opportunity for satisfactory self-expression. But it also serves to train and discipline the emotions, to put a religious dynamic behind conduct, and to elevate standards and attitudes. Both are important but the first makes the second possible, for only the person who engages in objective worship can obtain the advantages that result from subjective worship.

THE VALUE OF WORSHIP FOR JUNIORS

Makes Religion Vital. It has been said that the religious education of the immediate past has made children more intelligent concerning religious matters than were those of an earlier generation. They know more about the Bible and Bible facts and stories, chiefly because of the improvement that has been made in methods of imparting knowledge. But it is asserted that apparently knowledge has been the goal, for while we are giving the children a greater fund of religious information we are failing to make them religious. If this be true, it is a just indictment of our whole system of training, for unless that training makes it easy for a child to become a Christian with all that the name implies, it is a failure. He must have the great dynamic of love for God and love for his neighbor at the center of his life, and his deeds

must be such as would naturally spring from the motive of love. He must have reverence for holy things and an appreciation of the finest attributes of character, in the measure that is possible in each stage of his development. Whatever failure there has been in making religion vital to the child is in large measure due to neglect to provide for him genuine worship experiences.

Trains the Emotions. Worship arouses and strengthens the highest and purest emotions of which human nature is capable. For juniors this stimulation of the finest emotions and directing them toward the Supreme Being is of first importance. The education of the past has been so concerned with the intellect that it has failed to realize the need of educating the emotions. Fortunately, there is a growing sense of the fact that it is more important to train children to feel correctly than it is to train them to think and act in the right way, because trained emotions are a necessary prerequisite for right thought and conduct. It is as easy to educate the emotions as any of the faculties, and so far as we know there is no limit to the extent to which the emotional life of the individual may be trained. Many of the feelings normal to juniors are called into play in worship and given an upward trend which without worship experiences might easily become driving forces for powers headed in the wrong direction.

Arouses Loyalty to Jesus Christ. Loyalty to a leader is strong in juniors. This may be exercised toward the leader of a small group to which the child has attached himself or it may be aroused by admiration and respect felt for a person whom he considers a

hero. There is hardly a junior child who has not someone to whom he gives this sort of devotion. But the value of such loyalty depends upon the character of the person toward whom it is exercised and the qualities in that person which arouse admiration. Junior boys have a tendency to exalt physical strength. The hero of the young junior is invariably one who has shown his prowess in the physical realm whether it be as a prize fighter or baseball player or an athlete of distinction in some other field. But this is a natural basis which inevitably precedes and forms the foundation for moral and spiritual conceptions that will be developed as the child is religiously educated. Through worship loyalty is developed on the highest plane. Gradually the child comes to see that in Jesus Christ are found incarnate all the qualities that make men heroic, noble, and great.

Establishes a Reverent Attitude. Reverence has in it the admiration of loyalty coupled with wonder, awe, and affection. The natural basis of reverence is respect for older people and for those in authority. That juniors are capable of reverence no one can doubt who has ever led them in worship services or associated with them intimately under circumstances when that feeling would be the natural response to the situation. Occasionally one does meet individual juniors or groups of them in whom there seems to be no capacity for reverence, but it may be confidently asserted that the germs of that feeling are present in all but the most abnormal types.

In a Junior Department which met in a dark and unlovely basement the so-called service of worship

was actually a revel of irreverence. In the absence of the superintendent of the department, Mr. X, who had had some experience with juniors, was asked to take charge for a few weeks. Consulting with the director of education, he asked what it would be best to do with the worship period. "You can do absolutely nothing with that crowd," was the reply. "They are potential if not actual barbarians, and you can never get them into a worshipful frame of mind." The substitute, however, declined to be discouraged by his friend's pessimism and planned a service quite different from any that had ever been used. Some of the better singers were prepared to act as a choir; Scripture selections that juniors could understand were put into the hands of the children, and a subject that was timely and certain to elicit interest was chosen. The director was present on that first Sunday and said of the service afterward, "I have never attended any worship service which was more reverent or where there was a more perfect co-operation on the part of everyone present." The feeling of reverence had never been aroused or given a medium for expression in that department before, but in spite of the irreverent behavior it was present in some measure in the heart of every child in the room. The fact that all juniors have a strong desire to be in accord with those about them helps to make even those in whom the reverent spirit is not strong true participants in a well-adapted and reverently conducted worship service. The triumph of that service was the more marked because there was nothing in the environment that would suggest reverence or anything akin to it.

Deepens the Thankful Spirit. Gratitude is a joyous emotion, having in it affection, tenderness, and a desire to repay in some way the kindness that has been shown. Juniors are naturally thoughtless and apt to take for granted the good things that come into their lives, especially when they are constant. But even a slight suggestion of reasons why we, as God's children, should be grateful to him will arouse a most hearty response, and frequently the suggestion comes through the worship service.

In a church service one morning there was a spirit of deepest gratitude because the beloved pastor had returned to his people in full health and vigor after a severe illness from which it had been thought he could not possibly recover.

"Mother," said Marjorie as they walked home together, "why do I feel so thankful this morning? I never was so thankful in all my life before; and I thought of a lot of new things in church to be glad about and grateful for—at least they seemed new, though most of them I have always had."

A new vision had come to her through the service. The prayer had been specially real to her and her religious life was enriched by that experience. Her soul had been filled with the tide of gratitude that flowed through the church service, and she rejoiced with the others in the presence of the pastor in the pulpit from which he had so long been absent. But as she joined in the service and through it gave voice to the deep feeling of her heart, a sense of the goodness of God fairly took possession of her and made her see new values in life. Merely listening to the worship of others has comparatively little power over

the life. It is whole-souled participation in worship that brings the individual into closest relationship with God.

Broadens Fellowship and Good Will. While the junior child is naturally self-centered, the beginning of the junior period marks the broadening of the circle of his social experience. His chief interest is still centered in a small group. It is highly important for his religious growth that he shall develop a feeling of good will toward all of God's children, but this world-wide vision will have to come slowly. If we can bring it to pass that the children in the department shall co-operate with and have a feeling of good will for one another, we have led them to take a step outside of themselves and away from the narrow limits of their close, personal group and so have started them toward real fellowship. The service of worship affords an opportunity for such social co-operation. It is possible to worship alone, but there is no such joy in it as is found when one is in company with many others who are singing, praying, and praising together. There is a magic in such fellowship which can hardly be explained or understood but doubtless all who read these words have experienced it. It is a great factor in the religious training of juniors.

Helps to Strengthen Faith and Trust in God. In Chapter VII, on the "Prayer Life of the Child," will be found a discussion of the way in which little children through confidence in the power of their father and mother to provide things needful and to help them when help is required, come to realize the greater power of the heavenly Father and to trust in

that power. A junior has reached the time when he is extending his social contacts and exercising a keen and generally accurate judgment concerning the trustworthiness of people with whom he associates. It is a terrible experience for any individual when a person trusted and beloved proves to be unworthy of confidence, but for a *child* to discover faithlessness or grievous wrong in a person to whom he has given his loyalty and faith is a tragedy that may seriously handicap him in his religious life. If the child is to have a deep-rooted trust in God, he must begin with finding people whom he can trust. The law is "From the natural to the spiritual," and no spiritual truth can gain an entrance to the life of the child unless there is a natural truth already there to introduce it. So when the child has an implicit belief in people who are trustworthy, upon this basis is gradually built up a deep-rooted faith in God which steadies the whole life.

There is an abundance of worship material which expresses in terms easily understood the trust that is normal to juniors. In the beginning it will be a more or less self-centered reliance upon the power of God as a protector and provider, but gradually the children begin to trust in God for strength and opportunity to help in carrying out his purposes in the world.

Worship Experiences Apart From the Service. It often happens that the teacher, during the class session, will find that the story she has told, the scripture that has been recalled, a verse of a hymn to which reference has been made, or an incident reported has produced a worshipful spirit in the group.

There should always be at such times a free and natural turning to God in prayer or some other form of expression which will satisfy the desire for communion with him that has suddenly been felt by the members of the group. A teacher in a summer assembly was talking with the children about the hymn, "This Is My Father's World." The room in which they were having the class session was slightly below the level of the ground. At the level of the lower sash of the windows, just high enough for the children to look out of them comfortably, was the ground in which tall grasses had grown up. Taking the class to the window, the teacher spoke of the beauties of the world, of the birds and the flowers, and then as the grass was swaying gently in the breeze she quoted,

"This is my Father's world,
He shines in all that's fair,
In the rustling grass I hear him pass,
He speaks to me everywhere."³

Some of the children clasped their hands and the faces of all were shining as they watched the grass in a reverent silence.

"Shall we thank our Father for his beautiful world?" asked the teacher after a moment.

"Oh, do," said one child, eagerly, and instantly all heads were bowed.

Such moments may come to the class teacher at any time, and she should always be ready to take advantage of them and lead the children in a loving recognition of the presence of God.

³ Maltbie D. Babcock. Charles Scribner's Sons. Used by permission.

In the Beginners and Primary Departments the children, if rightly trained, have had definite worship experiences suited to their understanding and interests. With the broadened conception of God and greater knowledge of the loving ministry of Jesus which children in later childhood may attain, it is possible, through worship, to strengthen the foundation of the spiritual life most effectively. Failure to lead the child into reverent loving communion with God at this age can never be atoned for or rectified in later years. As teachers of religion it is our business to see that the child finds in a loving God the axis for his universe, and the most effective method for bringing this to pass is by making it possible for him to come into companionship with his heavenly Father through well-ordered, reverent, and appropriate services of worship.

Assignment

A Christian minister once said to the writer that he thought his two children, aged nine and eleven, had no needs in religious education that could not be adequately met by the home. In his church there was a thoroughly organized and equipped Junior Department in which the worship services were reverent and well adapted to meet the interests and understanding and to arouse and express such religious feelings and desires as are normal for children. Was he right or wrong in his attitude? Give reasons for your answer.

Analyze the elements that must have been present in the service of worship which Majorie attended. What was the emotion in the hearts of the people?

Give an example of the kind of Scripture and hymns that you think were used.

Could Majorie have attained the experience that came to her that day through individual worship? In what way was her religious life broadened and deepened? Would a church service prepared for adults ordinarily influence a child's life to that degree? Give reasons for your answer.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

Hugh Hartshorne—*Worship in the Sunday School*.

Chapter II, "The Social Function of Worship."

Chapter IV, "The Purpose of Worship."

Henry Frederick Cope—*Religious Education in the Church*.

Chapter V, "The Function of Public Worship."

James Bissett Pratt—*The Religious Consciousness*.

Chapter I, "Religion."

Chapter II, "The Psychology of Religion."

Chapter XIV, "Objective and Subjective Worship."

Mary Theodora Whitley—*A Study of the Junior Child*.

Chapter X, "The Religious Life."

CHAPTER II

CONDITIONS WHICH MAKE JUNIOR WORSHIP POSSIBLE

FORE-EXERCISE

HAVE there ever been times in your life when the beauty of some church or cathedral has aroused within you a sense of God's presence and a spirit of worship? Has this experience ever come to you on entering a Sunday-school room? If so what was there about the room that aroused such feelings? If not, what did the Sunday-school room lack that you found in the church?

Has any worship service ever been spoiled for you by the conditions of the environment? If you could have the power to change such conditions what would you do?

As a Sunday-school teacher do you find that you participate as fully in a Sunday-school service of worship as you do in the church service? If there is a difference what is it, and what causes it?

A REGARD FOR THE GOSPEL OF BEAUTY AND ORDER

Importance of Beauty. In a recent book the opening sentence of a chapter devoted to Religious Education is this: "There are very few things, perhaps nothing, more important to do for a child than to help him to see that the world is beautiful." And in the last paragraph we read: "In this whole matter of the relations of art and education, the primary need is a change of attitude toward beauty. Like

truth and goodness, it is an end in itself. It is one of the supreme values. We try to help children to be good for practical and social ends, but also because goodness is ultimate, because it derives from a divine mandate. So, also, art will help us as an excellent means to other ends, but this is not the chief reason for its being. One of the essentials of education, both general and religious, is beauty. To help young lives to see and enjoy beauty is to help them apprehend God."

"Vision, humility, vitality, illumination, enlistment—these constitute the experience of worship, and these may all be kindled in the experience of beauty."¹

A junior superintendent reports this incident, which is characteristic of the way that juniors respond to beauty and fitness in their church environment.

"It was Easter morning. The eleven-year-old daughter of a professor walked up the steps of the church with me chatting gayly. We passed through the vestibule in the same mood and then opened the door of the church. The altar was very beautifully arranged. A simple bank of Easter lilies covered the pulpit and on each side was a tall brass candelabrum holding ten lighted candles. The church was only partially lighted. I stopped instantly upon opening the door and caught my breath with a feeling of inexpressible reverence as the loveliness impressed itself upon me. For a moment I forgot the child. Then I heard her say, in a voice gentle with awe and

¹*Art and Religion*, Von Ogden Vogt. Used by permission Yale University Press.

reverence, 'It looks just like heaven.' I looked into her face and I am sure there was real worship in her heart at that moment."

The material things among which we live may not seem to have any close relation to the high plane of spiritual feeling and expression where true worship is found. But there is an affinity between physical cleanliness and spiritual purity and between beauty and the God who "has made everything beautiful in his time," which all who are engaged in the work of religious education should recognize. And yet there are Sunday schools in which no thought is given to making the surroundings cheerful and beautiful and where the leaders are attempting to help the children to live a life of obedience to God's laws in an environment which presents the antithesis of law in its confusion and disorder.

The windows of the room were of ground glass, probably because some misguided member of the building committee had conceived it to be wrong for children during the Sunday-school hour to look out into God's world. In obstructing their vision it also prevented the entrance of any ray of sunlight into the room. The paint was a dull blue-gray. The carpet was old and worn. The wainscoting around the base carried the autographs of many generations of mops that had been used on the floor before the carpet was purchased. Judged by their antiquity alone they were worthy of preservation as historical relics, but they added nothing to the beauty of the room. In the window seats there were dusty samples of left-over Sunday-school papers. Scattered about the room were Bibles with covers torn off. Many were defaced

by penciled pictures and writing. One was in use as a base for a vase on the piano. The piano was dusty. In one corner some chairs were piled with their legs in the air, or, rather, in what would have been the air if there had been any in the room, for the sexton was as hesitant about disturbing the windows in the interest of ventilation as he was concerning the use of dust cloths. On the walls were several pictures of officers of the church who had long since gone to their reward. The visitor was chilled by the atmosphere of the place and depressed by its condition and, therefore, was not greatly surprised to find the teachers and officers as well as the children in a discouraged attitude. The so-called opening exercises were perfunctory. They could not be anything else when conducted and participated in by adults who saw nothing incongruous in attempting to educate children religiously and train them to worship God in such an environment.

A little later a new superintendent was chosen, and she initiated her work by assembling the teachers for an afternoon and evening devoted to a house-cleaning bee. The Ladies' Aid Society soon became interested and offered to purchase a new carpet and to have the walls and woodwork painted. In time attractive windows replaced the ground glass and gradually the room became beautiful as well as orderly and clean. There was no space for cloak rooms but a shelf was placed along the side of the room with attractive curtains to hide the hooks underneath when not in use so the hats and wraps were taken care of. The ancient photographs were transferred to the trustees' room and their place on

the walls taken by pictures of vital interest to the children. The sexton, whom all had considered hopeless, was so affected by the new appearance of the room that he wore out innumerable dust cloths in the service of the Junior Department though the quality of his work in other parts of the church building was not improved. From the time that neatness and order began to reign in that junior room the "opening exercises" became true services of worship. The physical changes in equipment and conditions do not fully explain the fact that the worship service enlisted genuine participation on the part of the children. But certainly without those changes the improvement in the worship period would not have been possible.

The room given to the juniors may not be all that the teachers could ask. It may have an inadequate equipment but it can be clean and kept in order and given some little touches of beauty, and must be if any worth-while religious education is to be carried on within its walls. The unconscious tuition given through the condition of the room is even more powerful than any spoken word. Certainly, where the two conflict the influence of the surroundings which are seen will be more potent in the life than any words which are merely heard.

THE A B C TEST

A Junior Department superintendent was consulting with the building committee and the architect who were planning a new church and church-school building. The question of the junior room was under consideration.

"There are three possible rooms that can be given to the juniors," said the architect. "There are a large basement room, the room between the primary and beginners, and the third story of the tower. Which would you prefer?"

"The test that I must apply to any room offered me," said Mr. Jordan, "is what I call the A B C criterion. The first question is, Is the room *appropriate*? That is, does it fit our needs in location, form, and size? Second, is it *beautiful* or can it be made so? We want our room to be so attractive that the children will find joy in coming to it. Third, will it be *comfortable*? Is there light enough, and does it come into the room in such a way that the children will not have to face it? Is there floor space enough for the number of children that we have or expect to have? Where will the artificial lights be placed? Is there a plan for ventilating as well as heating the room?"

Seeing a rather blank look on the faces of the group who were listening to him Mr. Jordan said:

"Let me explain why I elevate the comfort of the children to a high place as a requirement. My experience as a junior superintendent has shown me that you cannot teach a child who is uncomfortable. The physical looms so large in a child's consciousness that it is very difficult for him to rise above or forget even for a moment any kind of discomfort. This fact is manifest in all phases of our work, but perhaps nowhere more than during the worship period.

"One Sunday not long ago I visited a Junior Department. I found that the superintendent was well qualified for her position and had made careful prep-

aration for the session. The teachers were punctual and one could see by the attention paid during the ante-session period that they had not only the necessary knowledge but zeal and enthusiasm for the work. And yet during the worship period there was an indefinable unrest among the children. It seemed impossible for them to enter into the spirit of the service though it was admirably planned and reverently conducted. The whole trouble was that the children were distressed by conditions in the room. In order to look at the superintendent and follow her lead in the service they had to face the light from windows at either side of the platform, the only windows in the room. The room was very hot but could not be ventilated without sending drafts of cold air down the necks of children and teachers. No provision had been made for taking care of the hats and wraps and many of the girls were wearing both with the thermometer at eighty. In some cases coats were hung on the backs of the chairs, giving the room the general appearance of a disorderly second-hand clothing store. The children were seated on folding chairs with backs that sloped outward and seats higher in front than at the back. Any effort to sit forward in the chair in order to get relief from the distressing slant of the back resulted in the collapse of the chair. As there were no class tables, the pupils were trying to hold their Bibles and song-books on their knees while balancing themselves precariously on the too yielding seat. The church has learned that little beginners must not be asked to sit in pews built for adults, as they had to do in the days of our fathers; but the importance of pro-

viding conditions that make for comfort for all of our children is not yet fully understood."

After listening to these statements the architect hastened to withdraw from consideration the basement room and the long, narrow room between the primary and beginners' rooms. Fortunately, the tower room could be so arranged as to meet all the requirements, and when the buildings were finished Mr. Jordan and his teachers not only had no undesirable physical conditions to contend against but found in the beautiful tower room both joy and inspiration for all their work.

FREEDOM FROM DISTRACTIONS

Interruptions. Juniors have little power to give voluntary attention to any subject when the involuntary attention is tempted to go hither and yon by interruptions, noises, or movement in the room. In fact, the same thing might be said truthfully of older people. The teacher of a training class was talking on the subject of attention, voluntary and involuntary, when a cat came into the room and walked from one side to the other in plain sight of those present. Every member of the class followed the cat with her eyes and not one of them heard the sentences that were uttered by the teacher while the cat was pursuing its leisurely peregrination. If the attention of grown people can be so easily diverted, how can we expect children to worship unless we guard the service from every disturbing influence?

Tardiness. Miss Jackson was asked to organize a Junior Department in a suburban church. The Sunday before the department was to be started she at-

tended the session of the school. Finding herself a little late she hurried, remembering that when she tried to visit John Wanamaker's school in Philadelphia and because of a delay on the trolley had arrived two minutes late she had found every door not only closed but locked. She found there was no need for haste on this occasion, for not even the superintendent had arrived when she entered the room, the utmost confusion reigned and was not appreciably diminished a little later when the superintendent came and attempted to make herself heard sufficiently to announce a hymn. During all of what was intended to be a worship service late-comers were entering the room and taking their places in their classes. The treasurer distributed class envelopes during the singing of the first hymn. The secretary sat in front of the room and marked some kind of a record during the prayer. In the midst of the service a young lady walked up one of the aisles and standing by the side of one of the teachers talked to her for several minutes. Miss Jackson realized that with teachers and children who were accustomed to having things of that kind permitted and done she was facing a serious problem. After considering it for several days she decided to ask the superintendent, his assistant, the pastor, and her teachers to meet in a conference with her. In that conference she laid before them the work that she hoped to accomplish for the juniors and dwelt specially upon the importance of the worship service as a factor in Christian training. Then she said: "The greatest difficulty we will have to face is the fact that some children and teachers are late every Sunday. The attention of

juniors is so easily diverted that we can have no worth-while worship unless we can have the period free from distractions of every kind. This means that we cannot have late-comers entering during the worship period."

The superintendent objected at once, saying that neither children nor teachers who thought they were going to be late would come at all if they were to be kept outside. The pastor rather agreed with him. But finally a plan was made to place two comfortable settees in the hall outside of the door of the junior room and have someone there each Sunday to see that no one attempted to enter the room until the doors were opened. With this matter satisfactorily disposed of the main difficulty was settled. Neither teachers nor children stayed away or went home when they were late. In fact, both attendance and punctuality improved rapidly among the juniors as soon as the department was organized.

A few weeks after its organization the superintendent was overheard saying to a visiting friend, "You ought to see our Junior Department and you surely must be there during the worship service. It is simply wonderful. But you will have to get into the room before nine forty-five, for you will not be admitted if you are even a minute late." And he said it as if he gloried in that fact.

To sum up this section of the chapter: Juniors cannot worship if late-comers or other people are allowed to enter the room during the service. However honestly they may try to follow and participate in the worship service, they cannot do so unless every adult in the room is in an attitude of reverent attention.

Some business is necessary in every organization, but no one can attend to business details of any kind and worship *at the same time*, and if business is carried on during the worship period, it will distract attention and to the extent that it does so will render the service of no effect. If a secretary or treasurer has the habit of pursuing the uneven tenor of his way about the room while others are worshipping, he should be reasoned with by those in authority. If his reformation cannot be brought about through suggestion or expostulation his resignation should be requested. Far better would it be for the school not to know at the end of the session just how many had been present in the Junior Department, and the amount of their gifts, than for the pupils of that group to be prevented from having a quiet and uninterrupted period for communion with their heavenly Father.

The Tyranny of Things. It was a most attractive room which Miss Hendrick, the junior superintendent, entered that Sunday morning. One of her friends said of it, "It is just like some homes where you find such an atmosphere of joy and good will that you wish you might take off your hat and stay to tea." It was still twenty minutes before the time for the session to begin. Very soon two boys and two girls came in and immediately went to work. They distributed song books and Bibles. They cleaned the blackboard and then began sorting and folding the Sunday-school papers which were sent in for all the Sundays in the month in one bundle. When the session began there was instant attention and a reverent joy was manifest as the service moved on the wings

of melody, prayer, and praise. The pastor had come in just before the prelude began and remained not to observe, as he had expected to do, but to participate with delight in the service. When the classes had gone to their classrooms for the lesson period the pastor asked, "How is it that this department has become so orderly and the worship service such a genuine expression of reverence and love? It was not so last year."

"No," said Miss Hendrick, "I know it was not. I think the change is due to the realization that came to me of the tyranny of things over junior children. You know a year ago we had no classrooms and the children sat at their tables during the whole session. I found that one source of distraction during the worship period was that on every table there were class pencils which were for later use. A pencil near at hand has power to wreck a worship service for a junior child. As he sees it lying there he is lured by it. He cannot resist the temptation to take it in his hand and play with it or use it for unlawful scribbling. When he is doing that he is not worshipping. So we bought class boxes and the pencils and other class materials were kept out of sight until the class period began. Now that we have an assembly room we are not bothered by the tables, but for a while we were hampered by the fact that we did not have enough Bibles and songbooks to go round. Did you notice that to-day every child had a copy of each? When these were called for in the service they were ready. A child who is playing with something or who finds it necessary either to hunt for or go without songbook or Bible is out of touch with the serv-

ice, and the worship becomes less helpful to all because of his failure to co-operate."

"I see," said the pastor. "Well, your plan has certainly worked. It was evident that every person in the room was taking part whole-heartedly in the service to-day."

THE SIN OF DISCOURAGEMENT

Sometimes teachers and officers, having a department which is poorly equipped, and having to fight against other undesirable conditions, become disheartened. They realize that the worship service is not what it should be but excuse themselves from any attempt to make it better by saying, "We can never hope to do anything different until we can have a new room." The truth is that many conditions can be changed if those who are suffering under them have the courage to undertake to get rid of them and the perseverance to keep trying until the desired end is accomplished. In an institute one day a junior superintendent complained, "I have tried for three years to get permission to have the juniors in their own room for the whole of the session and have not succeeded yet." An older woman at once replied: "Don't give up, sister. I have been trying in vain for sixteen years to get my church to support the Sunday school, but I expect to win the victory before I die if I can keep out of the Old Ladies' Home long enough." This is the spirit which wins, and it is the only spirit which will influence juniors to do and dare for the right. The willingness to join hands with despair and sink back into the place where nothing is attempted and, therefore, nothing accom-

plished, is not the Christian attitude. That very spirit of discouragement makes its impression upon the children and helps to defeat the purpose of Christian training.

Assignment

Draw a plan to show what you think the tower room of Mr. Jordan's Junior Department must have been like, indicating place of windows, position of platform and location of piano. (There is an elevator for the tower rooms, so one side of the room on each floor has a blank wall shutting off the hall.) Describe the way in which you would furnish such a room, giving color scheme and general plans for making it beautiful. It looks out upon a river with hills beyond. Would you have stained, or colored, or clear glass windows? Give reasons for your choice. Is your own junior room convenient and beautiful? If not, list in order of their importance the things you would do to make it over. Take these to class as a basis for discussion.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

George Albert Coe—*Education in Religion and Morals*.

Chapter XVI, "The Family."

Chapter XVII, "The Sunday School."

NOTE: Valuable references to worship will be found in these chapters, though they do not deal specifically with that subject.

Von Ogden Vogt—*Art and Religion*.

Chapter XII, "Religious Education."

Weigle and Tweedy—*Training the Devotional Life*

Chapter VII, "Worship in the Church School."

Mabel Crews Ringland—*Tested Methods for Teachers of Juniors*.

Chapter XXXV, "Developing Reverence."

CHAPTER III

THE TEACHER'S PART AND THE LEADER'S RESPONSIBILITY

FORE-EXERCISE

THINK of the Sunday-school teachers you have had and answer for yourself these questions concerning each one.

In what way did that teacher influence my life?

Was it through his or her

Breadth of learning

Teaching ability

Enthusiasm

Character

Personality

Personal interest in me and affection for me

Or was it a combination of some or all of these things?

Was the interest of the teacher centered solely in the class or was the class led to realize that it was a part of the department or school?

Were you helped by the teacher to co-operate in the department or school program?

Was the spirit of the teacher reverent and worshipful?

What department or Sunday-school superintendent do you remember with the greatest pleasure?

Is this the one that exerted the greatest influence over your life? Analyze the reasons.

THE TEACHER

Inward Grace. The first qualification for a teacher of religion is that she shall have a vital religious life and experience. Children are keen interpreters of character, and above what the teacher says they will always hear the voice of what she is. If the two do not utter the same message the spoken word, though often reiterated, will not be able to make itself heard. If they are in tune, it is impossible to overestimate the influence that the teacher may exert. It is the teacher who comes in closest personal contact with the pupil. Her spirit and example are always powerful and, in some cases where the home is not Christian, are more potent in molding the life of the child than is any other human factor.

The inward grace of a true Christian teacher will invariably find outward manifestation all through the Sunday-school session but perhaps nowhere more effectively than in the worship service. The spirit of devotion that characterizes a true follower of Jesus Christ will lead the teacher to participate with whole-souled and reverent joy and her spirit will be contagious.

Co-operation. Worship is individual, but as a public service it is essentially a social act. As such it involves fellowship with other worshipers and in order to be complete must have the co-operation of all in every part of the service. If the children are deprived of the feeling of fellowship with their teacher, whom they can see, by her failure to participate in the service, how can they be expected to have a realization of the presence of God whom they

cannot see? Here as always the teacher either leads the child to the heavenly Father or stands in the way, preventing the vision that might be his. Since true worship calls for the exercise of thought, feeling, and will, it involves the whole personality. If the teacher sings or reads with no thought of the meaning of the message of hymn or Scripture, if at the time of prayer her thoughts are far away, she is not in the spirit of love and fellowship, her emotions are not stirred. She will be in the group but not of it, and her failure to subordinate self in an act of co-operation will mar the service for her pupils.

Some excuse themselves for not taking part or even paying attention when hymns are sung by saying that they cannot sing. They can and should follow the words and make the sentiment of the hymn the expression of their own thought and desire. Many children who are unable to carry a tune and can have no part in singing the melody have been helped by teachers equally handicapped to enter heartily into the spirit of the song.

Whenever any undertaking requires concerted action on the part of several people there must be certain understood and obeyed rules and regulations. Otherwise each member of the group would be acting on his own initiative and the result would be utter confusion. Probably the greatest failure on the part of teachers generally comes at this point. They do not hear the signals, perhaps, or, hearing, they do not heed them but go on with whatever conversation, instruction, or work has been started during the ante-session period. Perfect co-operation involves prompt attention and obedience to signals.

Memorization. There are certain passages of Scripture and many of the great hymns of the church used in the worship service which the junior children are expected to commit to memory, and consistency requires that the teachers shall know what the children are expected to learn. A teacher was explaining to her class how great a help it would be to them all their lives to know a certain passage of Scripture which she was trying to have them memorize. Seeing that she kept her Bible open while hearing some of the class recite, one of the girls asked, "Do you know it, Miss Smith?" "No," answered the teacher, rather hesitatingly, and before she could frame an excuse for her ignorance the pupil flashed back, "Well, if you have gotten on without it all these years and have grown up to be a Sunday-school teacher, I do not know any reason why we need to learn it."

It is always essential that the practice of those who are guiding the young shall be consistent with their teachings, but this is not the only reason why the junior teacher should become thoroughly familiar with the worship materials which the children learn. There are a few fortunate teachers of the present day who had training in worship when they were children, and each of these has a store of worship materials that is firmly fixed in memory and has become an integral part of the religious life. But the great majority of teachers have had no such experience, and for these the junior program brings an opportunity to train themselves in the knowledge and use of worship materials at the same time that they are training the children.

Binding the Lesson Teaching to the Worship Service.

The teacher who participates with interest and appreciation in the service of worship will find many opportunities for re-enforcing the lesson teaching by reference to hymns that have been sung and Scripture that has been used. Any part of the session loses strength when it is, or seems to the children to be, separate and distinct from all other parts. If the service of worship is well adapted to junior children, it will be of such a nature that other parts of the session will be but an expression of the good will toward others and love for God which have been aroused in the act of worship. The teacher who is quick to see and appreciate values can often gather up the threads of the service in which the child has been led into communion with God and weave them into her lesson. When this can be done it deepens the impression made and gives unity to the work.

Worship Experiences in Class. The class teacher has a more vital touch with the worship experiences of her children than has as yet been implied. If the lessons that she is giving are so presented that they consist only of drills and factual and ethical teachings, she is doing less skillfully the same type of work that is being done by public-school teachers. The lessons taught in the church school are first of all religious in content and in aim. It is to be expected that such lessons, when developed by a teacher who has the ability to feel and express religious values, will bring to the members of the class spontaneous experiences of worship such as that described in Chapter I, page 24. In fact, any teacher who does not have such experiences in the class should ques-

tion her method carefully to see whether she is not devoting herself to the mechanics of teaching rather than developing in the hearts of the children that religious feeling which furnishes the dynamic for Christian living.

THE LEADER

Constructing the Worship Program. To the superintendent of a Junior Department which meets in its own room for the whole time of the session is given a rare privilege which is at the same time a great responsibility. To plan and lead the worship service for a group of boys and girls in this impressionable age is to have an opportunity to raise thought and feeling to the highest plane; to bring into their young lives the consciousness of the presence of God and a sense of companionship with him, to broaden and deepen the feeling of fellowship and good will as the children unite in this approach to the heavenly Father. This is a high prerogative. There are few tasks given to workers in the Lord's vineyard in which are bound up more far-reaching possibilities. It is this fact that creates the responsibility. If the service is not planned in such a way as to arouse normal religious emotions in the hearts of the children and furnish a fitting vehicle for the expression of such emotions, it becomes merely a formal exercise in which certain words are said and sung without awakening any religious feeling. It is not an easy matter to plan a suitable service for any group of juniors. (A ready-made program taken bodily from some book without attempt at adaptation is not likely to be any more successful than a ready-made

lesson is when used with a class just as it is found in a teacher's book. Each must be molded anew by leader or teacher to fit the need and interests of the group if it is to become a motive power for Christian living. The conscientious junior superintendent who realizes how great is her opportunity will give as much time and thought to the careful and prayerful preparation of the worship service as a successful teacher gives to lesson preparation.

The first duty in program planning involves making an outline for the year. In this sketch the first item will be the designation of special days. These are fixed in the church and national calendar and the atmosphere which they will create can be definitely foreseen. The next step will naturally be to decide upon certain subjects for emphasis in the weeks leading up to the more important of the special days.

The method to be used in building programs and the principles upon which they are based are discussed in Chapter X. The character of the Scripture and hymns and quotations from other literature, the music that is suitable, the prayer life of the child and the prayer service in the Sunday-school session are treated in Chapters IV to VIII. The point of emphasis here is that each service shall be carefully prepared with the needs of the children as a deciding factor in every case.

After having outlined programs for the year the superintendent will often find that some local or national event has turned the whole thought of the community in a certain direction and that to have a worship service that will best serve the children on

that particular Sunday the plan already made must be abandoned for that day in favor of one which fits the occasion more completely. At one time during the World War soldiers were sent from Camp Dix in New Jersey to Newark to take part in a Victory Loan parade. Their leave extended over Sunday and they were being entertained in scores of homes. They were in the thought of everyone. As the junior children came into the Sunday-school room they gathered in groups and talked of their brothers, cousins, or friends who were in the visiting regiment. On the blackboard in the front of the room, lettered in an attractive way, was the verse added to the national hymn for war-time use beginning,

"God bless our splendid men,
Send them safe home again,
God bless our men."

Of course everyone reading that verse supposed it to be an indication that the theme of the worship service would be related to the subject uppermost in every mind. But there was no mention of the visiting soldiers. Even the verse on the board was neither referred to nor sung. The program used was one that had evidently been prepared on some long previous day and was as unsuited to that time of excitement and anxiety as anything that could be imagined. The responsibility placed upon that leader was not met. A great opportunity was lost.

Thorough Preparation. The first task that confronts the superintendent who is to conduct a worship service is to prepare an outline which will fill each moment of the time allotted to worship but will not

overrun that period. The next duty is to see that books are ready, the program written for the pianist, and all other mechanical matters attended to, in order that the leader may enter into the spirit of the worship unhampered by distracting worries about forgotten or overlooked details. The skilled leader knows that the best program will fail to accomplish its mission if it becomes necessary to pause at any point for consultation or to give directions. The least diversion of attention from the act of worship to the machinery of the service will destroy the spirit of worship in the group.

The leader must be a leader in every part of the service. When the pupils and teachers are expected to listen reverently to the instrumental prelude with which the service begins, the leader must set an example of interested attention. When the children are expected to recite or sing hymns from memory the leader should not find it necessary to use a book. The pastor of a junior church once apologized to the children for using a book during the memory period and explained that he was shell-shocked during the war and since then had not been able to rely upon his verbal memory at all. The children understood, and his failure to recite when they were expected to do so had no undesirable effect. But any leader whose only excuse for not doing what the children are expected to do is indifference or inertia will fail to some extent in leadership and influence.

The superintendent who will most effectively train juniors in worship will be reverent in thought, manner, and speech, both in the approach to and the conduct of the service, inspired by an earnest desire to

lead the children toward high ideals and worthy attitudes, and realizing in the worship a joyous personal fellowship with the members of the department as together they enter into companionship with God.

Preparing the Group to Use the Materials of Worship Intelligently. Children do not enjoy singing a song with which they are not sufficiently familiar to be able to forget the mechanics of the music and lose themselves in the joy of singing. Junior children, in most of our public schools, are being taught to read music but they are not sufficiently versed in the art to follow the notes and reproduce them easily. In order to put them at ease in the use of any selection, practice is necessary at a time apart from the worship service. It is important also that when the children first use a hymn it shall be given to them with the retards and other forms of expression that the sentiment requires. This makes it necessary for the superintendent, the leader of the singing if there be one, and the pianist, to study the hymn together and decide concerning the method of singing that will best express the meaning. Many people take it for granted that always in group singing outside of trained choruses there must be a rigid adherence to time. This is true of general congregational and other large assembly singing, but we are dealing with a special group whose members we meet week after week. Our purpose in bringing them together is to educate them religiously, and as one of the means to that end, the worship service is of paramount importance. The effect upon the minds of the children of the hymns used will depend largely upon the manner

in which they are sung. To follow the tempo regardless of sentiment is to lose the opportunity to emphasize important shades of meaning. Therefore, one rule in preparing for the intelligent use of worship material is, "Not time, but the sentiment to be expressed, should decide the manner in which the musical selections are rendered." Anyone who studies hymns with this rule in mind will be surprised at the wealth of meaning that may be brought out in impressive phrases by the simple expedient of retarding a movement or holding an important word. The writer had heard, "O Come, All Ye Faithful,"¹ sung by church choirs and by large congregations again and again, but a single mark of expression used by a department-store quartet on one of the days preceding Christmas gave to it the thrilling climax that was never in it before. They sang, "O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him," as those phrases are usually sung, but the third time they sang, "O come, let us adore *him*," retarding the two quarter notes of the last word and holding the second long enough to give to the pronoun an emphasis that was indescribably impressive. The last three words, "Christ the Lord," were also sung with great expression but they were simply a satisfactory and explanatory end for the climax which preceded. To sing in strict accord with time is to stress the mechanics of the music. Our purpose requires that we shall give expression to the spiritual content of both music and words. A single word of caution may be needed here. "Freedom of time must not be confounded with license, or with disregard of time; for freedom is the

¹ Oakeley translation.

highest perfection or the ideal of legality and order, while license leads to disorder and anarchy."²

Another point in preparation for worship is the practice of reading and reciting in concert. It is difficult to tell where children get the voice that they invariably use in concert reading. It sounds as if it had emanated from a subcellar and is devoid of life and expression. Undoubtedly, this deadness of voice is due to the fact that the words are uttered without any thought of their meaning. They are repeated by the lips, but the mental processes are busy elsewhere. In order to overcome this tendency time is needed for actual practice in the art of reading together, and for this, as well as for explaining the meaning and helping the children to see the beauty of the passage, a special period is required during or apart from the Sunday session.

When a poem is to be used, practice is necessary to keep the children from following the rhythm of the meter in a singsong way and letting the voice fall at the end of every line regardless of the sense. Some children even swing from side to side in the exuberance of their appreciation of the rhythm when reading or reciting poetry. This, again, is mechanical and when put in the foreground obstructs the meaning that both rhythm and rime should help to emphasize.

Difficulties Some Superintendents Have to Meet. If the books provided for the department are of the revival or light, inferior, commercial type, it is a good plan to discard books altogether for a time. The

² *The Elements of the Beautiful in Music*, Ernst Pauer. Novello and Company. Used by permission.

words of hymns can be printed and put up before the department until new books of the right kind can be purchased. This gives an opportunity to acquaint the children with the best songs of the best books and prepares them for the use of a good book by elevating tastes that may have been vitiated by a lower grade of material. This method has an advantage, too, in the fact that the superintendent can draw upon all the best books for selections, as only two or three copies of each will be needed. In some departments where this method has been used the hymns have been hastily and poorly printed on sheets of paper of varying sizes, which as the weeks passed became crumpled, torn, and dusty. It is as irreverent to use such materials for worship as it is to display in any other way a careless and indifferent spirit. The best plan is to print the words clearly and attractively on the cheapest white shades, and have curtain fixtures on the blackboard or on the front wall of the room. The song can then be put in the fixture easily and quickly and rolled down for use, and when not in use can be kept clean and will not take up much space.

When there is no junior service book for the department the Scripture passages must be read from the Bible. It is highly desirable that all the Bibles in the department shall be of one version. But it is a great advantage to juniors to read from *their own Bibles*, as they become familiar with the book much more quickly and easily if they use the same one always, and the two versions need not cause any difficulty or create confusion. The members of the department who have the King James Version can form one group and those who have the American Revised

another for responsive reading, one group reading with the superintendent, and the other led by one of the teachers. They will then be interested to see the differences in the translations but will not be confused by them. Where selections have to be made from different parts of the Bible in order to have the service centered about some one thought, the references can be given out in advance, and there will be less confusion if a certain group of individuals or classes is made responsible for each one of the selections to be used in the service.

The spirit of the Junior Department leader in approaching the service of worship serves in large measure to create the atmosphere in which that service will be conducted. Sometimes in an honest desire to seem reverent the leader is so serious as to appear gloomy. Such an attitude always arouses in the children a feeling of reluctance instead of the joyous inclination which is essential in true worship. Other leaders, in an attempt to make the service attractive to the children, have assumed an air of gladness which, because it was an assumption, had the appearance of frivolity. Between these two extremes lies the manner of the leader who experiences that deep feeling of holy joy which stirs the heart of everyone who worships the Father in spirit and in truth. "Such doth he seek to be his worshipers," and surely such would he choose to lead the children as they unite in praise, thanksgiving, and prayer.

Preparation for Class Discussion

What worship experiences have you had with your children in the class as a teacher?

What was it that brought the children into the spirit of worship?

How did you meet the need?

Compare your experience with at least three other junior teachers.

If the class was not in the mood for worship and you could not change their attitude, would you attempt to close the lesson or the class session with prayer? Give reasons for your answer.

What is the most impressive worship service you, as a leader, have ever had in your department?

What elements helped to make it significant?

Have you ever had a service which seemed to you a failure? What made it so? Was the fault in the frame of mind of the children, in your own attitude at the time, a lack of preparation, or because the subject you had chosen did not meet the needs of the children? Were there interruptions or disturbances that diverted attention?

If you have never led a Junior Department in worship, recall two or more worship services that you have attended in a Sunday school or a Junior Department and be ready to tell what the leader did that helped to make the service effective as a medium for worship; or, if the service was not satisfactory, name the points at which the leader failed.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

Marie Coles Powell—*Junior Methods in the Church School*.

Chapter II, "Educating Juniors Through Worship."

Margaret Slattery—*The Seed, the Soil, and the Sower*.

NOTE: A booklet of fifty pages which gives a startling presentation of the far-reaching possibilities of a teacher's influence.

CHAPTER IV

THE USE OF SCRIPTURE AND OTHER LITERATURE

FORE-EXERCISE

WHAT passages of Scripture can you recall memorizing during childhood through which you were able to worship then?

Do you remember Scripture used in worship which stayed with you through the week and helped to motivate your conduct?

Make a list of the kinds of Scripture that you enjoyed and that were dynamic in your life as a child.

Was there any time when some quotation from general literature which you read or heard when a child aroused such emotions as would be aroused and expressed in worship?

FORMS OF EXPRESSION IN WORSHIP

Necessity for Grading. There are several modes of expression habitually and naturally used by those who worship as they voice adoration, praise, and thanksgiving to God. Music, "the only art of heaven given to earth," has ever been the handmaid of religion. It is a universal language which people of every race and tongue understand. Few are the worshipers who do not find joy and satisfaction in listening to or singing music that breathes to the heart more perfectly than can any spoken word the very soul of religion.

But music alone would not give complete satisfaction to the worshiper. The language of speech is required to represent definitely human desires and aspirations, and this we find in ritualistic quotations from Scripture and other literature, in hymns which voice the religious experience of the ages, and in a direct address to the Deity in the form of prayer.

To those who give of their substance with loving devotion and an earnest desire to further the spread of the kingdom of God in the world, the act of giving becomes an important part of worship. The service of praise and thanksgiving helps us to realize vividly the presence and companionship of God and gives us a deepened sense of fellowship with other worshipers. But the offering service brings an added experience of great significance as it leads the worshiper to the high place of partnership with God in doing his work in the world.

All these forms of expression are as necessary in services of worship for children as they are in services intended for adults; but the material must be graded to meet the needs of immature minds. It will be our purpose in this and the five following chapters to consider the different types of material and decide upon principles and methods of selection that will make possible well-adapted services in which junior children may participate intelligently and with delight and benefit.

Three types of literature are in general use in services of worship—Scripture, selections from general literature, and hymns. The first and last are found in practically all Christian worship. The second is not used as often as it might be with advantage to

the worshipers. In the two great storehouses which we are considering in this chapter there is a wealth of material, but it represents many grades of literary value, expresses a wide range of religious experience, and is largely written from the adult point of view. Therefore the worker with boys and girls has need to devote much time and thought to the process of selection, and must constantly guard against the temptation to conclude that a passage of Scripture which has meant a great deal in his own religious life must therefore be excellent for juniors.

How often have leaders of children excused the use of manifestly adult material by saying, "He probably cannot understand it now but some day he will." It is not a question of understanding alone but of need and interest. Whatever worship material is chosen for juniors must be pulsating with a warm and instant appeal if it is to meet their need religiously. For too long a time they have been given cold-storage material to be kept until some hypothetical distant day when its meaning would burst upon them as a light out of a dark sky, and it would become a help for righteous living. Every junior child has so much need for inspiration and training in his religious life *as a child* that there is no time to give him guidance in dealing with adult problems. Even if one could be assured that such distant treatment would be effective, it would be folly to do this and leave the other undone.

If one were choosing for primary children, the recognized limits of their experience and knowledge set so rigid a standard that choice is comparatively easy. But when they reach the junior age they have

emerged into the period of boyhood and girlhood, with its enlarged social contacts and widened experiences. This fact makes possible the introduction of much material that would be out of place with primary children. Still the junior, too, has very decided limitations in interests and capacity. His normal religious life is neither that of an adolescent nor of an adult. He still lives in the realm of the literal and concrete. Symbolism speaks an unknown tongue. Abstract forms of statement cannot penetrate the citadel of his mind. His religious experience, if it is real, is so closely interwoven with his daily life that it has not yet emerged into consciousness as a thing by itself. If nurtured wisely by the church, he is growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, but the growth is that of the seed recently sown and not of the blade or the full corn in the ear.

SCRIPTURE

Principles of Selection. The language of Scripture appeals strongly to a child. It is dignified, reverent, concise, simple, and beautiful and expresses better than any other form of literature ever has, most of the things that one wishes to say to God in worship. Still, there are many types of Scripture which should not be used with juniors because of their limitations spiritually, mentally, and in experience. It is evident that verses which express an agony of repentance and remorse for grievous sins committed cannot possibly be true when uttered by a child. As has been said, only Scripture that is couched in concrete terms can be understood, and yet a great deal that is

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abstract and symbolic has been used with children. Probably the best-known abstract passage in the Bible is found in the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount. Because of the beauty of the Beatitudes and the richness of thought embodied in them they have been used by adults both in worship services for children and as material for them to memorize. It is true that single verses such as, "Blessed are the peacemakers," and "Blessed are the pure in heart," can be explained to children and understood by them, but as a whole the passage is beyond their comprehension and does not express what children would normally say.

In order to apprehend symbolism one must run two trains of thought upon parallel tracks at the same time, and this is a manifestly impossible feat for a child who finds it difficult always to keep one train of thought moving steadily toward a conclusion. The Christian Armor verses, Ephesians 6. 10-17, are one of the best-known examples of symbolic statement in Scripture. These, too, are frequently used with children, but because they have no power to translate the sword of the warrior and the parts of the armor mentioned into spiritual ideas the verses can mean nothing to them.

These are the principles that may guide us in choosing Scripture for juniors.

Whatever is selected will be concrete in form.

In its content it must express desires normal to children.

There must be inspirational passages which will furnish wings for the imagination and give birth to new thoughts and feelings.

While the main part of the language should be such as a child can understand, the ideas may be somewhat above him. Mentally and spiritually he is growing rapidly and enjoys the sensation of reaching up toward something to which he has not yet attained.

"Love is the great highway to religious realities." If the Scripture through which juniors worship is adequate, it will arouse love in the hearts of the worshipers for God and for all of his children. There will also be Scripture provided which will express that love in adoration, thanksgiving, gratitude, loyalty, good will and fellowship.

Some of the Scripture passages will be in prayer form. Bible prayers appeal mightily to juniors, and one reason why they like them so much is that the petitions are both short and direct—qualities which extemporaneous prayers in Sunday school frequently do not exhibit.

Select definite commands whenever ones suitable for children are found. Six beautiful colored-glass windows were given to a Junior Department and the donor suggested that as there was room for a short passage of Scripture at the bottom of every window, the children might choose the verses. They all wrote the verse beginning, "God so loved the world," but that was too long. Every other passage that was written by the children was a command except "The Lord is my shepherd."

Nature is very near to the children and they love to think of God at work in his world. Therefore we will choose passages in which the Hebrew poets helped their people to see God in his works.

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We will choose Scripture that tells of God's love and his watchful care in order to deepen in the lives of our children a trust in the heavenly Father which will cast out fear.

To further strengthen love for God and trust in him we will furnish in the Scripture that we select many expressions of faith and confidence.

The following are examples of the types of Scripture that are suitable for use in junior worship:

Praise and thanksgiving, Psalms 95. 1-7a; 100. 1-5; 104. 1-4; 117.

Bible prayers, Psalms 4. 8; 19. 14; 141. 3.

Definite commands, 2 Chronicles 15. 7; James 1. 22a; Luke 6. 31; Romans 12. 21; Luke 10. 27; 1 Corinthians 16. 13; Mark 16. 15; 1 Corinthians 10. 31; Matthew 6. 33.

God at work in his world, Job 12. 7-10; Psalms 104. 2-5, 10, 14, 16; 8. 1, 3, 4; 19. 1-6; Matthew 6. 25-33.

God's love and care, Psalms 27. 1; 36. 7; 91. 1, 2; Matthew 6. 25-33; John 3. 16; 1 John 4. 8; 1 Peter 5. 7.

Love for God and trust in him, Psalms 4. 8; 18. 1; 37. 5; 40. 3a; 90. 1, 2; Proverbs 16. 20; Isaiah 26. 3, 4.

God's omnipresence, Psalm 139. 7-12.

Ways in Which Scripture May Be Used in the Service.

It is desirable to make selections from different parts of the Bible, except in the case of unified passages such as the Shepherd Psalm (23), the Traveler's Psalm (121) and Psalm 100, in order that the verses used may focus attention and so deepen the impression made by the subject chosen for the service.

Concert recitation of verses or passages that have been committed to memory by the group.

Responsive, varied with concert reading from the book of worship. Vary the method. "Study the value of the unexpected." The trouble with a great many of our worship services is that they are all but stalled in ruts. Ruts of any kind create discomfort and impede progress.

The memory work of the various grades called for and given from memory as a part of the service when the passages correlate in thought with the subject for the day. The junior superintendent who knows, as every superintendent should, what each grade is studying and what the memory work is, can weave the verses into the worship service and so enrich the service and deepen the impression of the truth that the verses hold.

Sentences or longer passages set to music and sung as responses or used to re-enforce the sentiment expressed in other ways in the service. For instance, "The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him," has been given many settings and to have it sung softly is most effective as an introduction to the prayer service.¹

OTHER LITERATURE

Principles of Selection. The same rules that would guide in the selection of Scripture will be needed in taking quotations from general literature for use in worship services, but two additional points require emphasis.

First, whatever is taken from the works of modern writers must be reverent and worshipful and have a

¹See *Services and Songs for Use in the Junior Department of the Church School*, Josephine L. Baldwin, p. 186. Also pp. 61, 102, 40, 71 for the Junior Motto and other verses with musical settings.

strong ethical appeal. Some leaders, intrigued by a captivating phrase or new way of expressing an old idea, have introduced material into a worship service which has not the slightest religious appeal, and to the extent that it made any impression tended to secularize the service.

Second, all sermonizing and sentimentality should be scrupulously avoided. An old lady who had been in charge of a primary class for twenty-five years and then became the junior superintendent always used this verse as part of her worship service:

"I'll tell you the use of a penny,
And one that is better than any;
Never for cake or for candy to spend it,
But over the world to the heathen to send it."

It may be surmised that the only influence these lines exerted was to make the children long for the proscribed sweets.

Stimulating Quotations. Some of our modern poets have written mighty appeals for right living. Here is one from Alexander Pope:

"Honor and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part—there all the honor lies."

John Oxenham has written a great many beautiful poems which impress truth vividly upon the hearts and minds of juniors. Here is one of them:

"To every man there openeth
A way, and ways, and a way,
And the high soul climbs the high way,
And the low soul gropes the low;
And in between on the misty flats
The rest drift to and fro.

But to every man there openeth
A high way and a low,
And every man decideth
The way his soul shall go."²

"To look at the light,
To keep my thoughts white,
To fight the great fight;
To do with my might
What is good in God's sight,
To follow the Christ, the King."³

Such poems as this simply grip the junior with hooks of steel and many such should be used in our services of worship.

"Thou who hast made thy dwelling fair
With flowers below, above with starry lights,
And set thine altars everywhere—
To thee I turn, to thee I make my prayer,
God of the open air."⁴

"For flowers that bloom about our feet;
For tender grass so fresh and sweet;
For song of bird and hum of bee;
For all things fair we hear and see,
Father in heaven, we thank thee."⁵

Poetic commands are favorites too. A junior boy was asked why he liked a certain mandatory poem. "Oh, it is so explaining," was his answer. "It tells you just what to do."

"Like the star,
That shines afar

² Reprinted from "All's Well, by John Oxenham. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, George H. Doran Co., New York.

³ Writer unknown.

⁴ "God of the Open Air," by Henry van Dyke. Used by permission, Charles Scribner's Sons.

⁵ Writer Unknown.

Without haste
 And without rest,
 Let each man wheel with steady sway
 Round the task that rules the day
 And do his best." (Goethe.)

"Look up and not down,
 Look forward and not back,
 Look out and not in,
 Lend a hand."
 (E. E. Hale.)

"Square thyself for use. A Stone that may
 Fit in the wall is not left by the way."
 (Persian Proverb.)

Juniors find inspiration in short, stimulating quotations from the writings of men and women in recent history or present public life with whose names and records they are familiar. The opinions of modern writers expressed in a forcible way when they coincide with those voiced in Scripture deepen the impression most effectively.

Abraham Lincoln, who won for himself the name of "Honest Abe," said: "I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to the light I have."

George Washington, the father of his country, said, "I hope I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain, what I consider the most enviable of all titles, the character of an honest man."

"An honest man's the noblest work of God."
 (Alexander Pope.)

"There is something finer than to do right against inclination; and that is to have an inclination to do

right. There is something nobler than reluctant obedience, and that is joyful obedience. The rank of virtue is not measured by its disagreeableness but by its sweetness to the heart that loves it. The real test of character is joy. For what you rejoice in that you love. And what you love, that you are like.”⁶

“Habit is a cable; we weave a thread of it every day, and it becomes so strong we cannot break it” (Horace Mann).

Every junior teacher and superintendent should search for such quotations and keep them in scrap-book or file, for use in lessons or services and to be given to the children to be memorized. Occasionally it is desirable to have a fine poem or prose paragraph recited in the worship service by one of the pupils or by the leader.

Assignment

Select Scripture and a suitable quotation from general literature for a New Year worship service, and for one to be used on Temperance Sunday.

Look over the services in any junior worship book and criticize the Scripture used in at least three of them, asking and answering these questions:

Are the biblical quotations used suited to juniors?

Do they help to make more clear the subject chosen for the service?

Would you omit any part of them or add anything to them in order to strengthen the impression?

If you attend a church in which the selections in the Psalter are chosen by the number of the Psalm, do you ever find that the responsive reading weakens

⁶ *Joy and Power*, Henry van Dyke. Used by permission.

rather than strengthens the service? If so, what is the reason?

What could be done to make the Psalter of greater use in the service?

A girl of ten, when asked which of her memory verses she liked best, answered, "I like the verse, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' It has helped me in the dark." What other verses can you think of that would help a child who was afraid for any reason?

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

Richard C. Cabot—*What Men Live By*.

Part 4, "Worship."

NOTE: The other three parts of the book deal with Work, Play and Love. The section on Worship does not apply especially to this chapter, but is mentioned because it is a significant treatment of the whole subject.

Mary Alice Jones—*Training Juniors in Worship*.

Chapter VIII, "The Devotional Use of the Bible."

CHAPTER V

LYRIC POETRY IN WORSHIP

FORE-EXERCISE

WHAT hymns do you know by heart?

When did you commit them to memory?

Which of these hymns have been most valuable to you as a medium for worship? Which, if any, have helped to motivate conduct?

Were they helpful to you as a child or has their value been realized chiefly in adult life?

Make a list of the hymns you most enjoy singing and answer these questions regarding each:

Is the appeal in words or music?

If in the words, is your delight in the emotions which the words arouse, or in the satisfaction you find in the expression of feeling?

Are any of these hymns suitable for use with juniors?

HYMNS OF THE LONG AGO

Bible Hymns. From the earliest times of which we have record lyric compositions set to music have been used in worship. When the children of Israel had crossed the Red Sea they sang a song of triumph and praise.

“Jehovah is my strength and song,
And he is become my salvation :
This is my God, and I will praise him ;
My father’s God, and I will exalt him.”¹

¹Exod. 15. 2.

In the wilderness journey through the desert when God said, "Gather the people together, and I will give them water," the people of Israel in their joy and gratitude sang the song of the well.²

Before the Temple was built David began the compilation of the Hebrew book of religious lyrical poems, and this book "not only continued to be the hymn book of the primitive church but is to-day still unaltered—except as translations necessarily alter poetry—a treasury of hymnody for general Christendom. . . . It is perhaps not going too far to name this old book of hymns as the most often quoted and generally familiar single book in the possession of Occidental civilization."³ Dr. Reeves refers to the fact that Professor Crawford H. Toy has found "one hundred and thirty-seven quotations from the Psalms in the New Testament."⁴

The events chronicled in the New Testament were borne into the world's history on a shining tide of song. The Song of Mary, the Song of Elisabeth, the Gloria in Excelsis heard by the Bethlehem shepherds, the Song of Zacharias and the Nunc Dimittis of Simeon,⁵ show how naturally and inevitably hearts in tune with God find lyrical expression for their deepest emotions. At the end of the Passover supper which Jesus ate with his disciples the night before his crucifixion, after the tender prayer chronicled in John 17 had been offered, they sang a hymn together before leaving the upper room to go out into the Mount of Olives.⁶

² Num. 21. 17, 18.

³ *The Hymn as Literature*, Jeremiah Bascom Reeves. The Century Co. Used by permission.

⁴ *Quotations in the New Testament*.

⁵ Luke, Chapters 1 and 2.

⁶ Matt. 26. 30; Mark 14. 26.

Hymns of Yesterday. From that day to this Christians have been hymn lovers and hymn singers. "Christianity is the religion of spiritual song. It inherited a magnificent psalmody, but has given birth to an invaluable hymnology. . . . Hebrew psalmody and Christian hymnody have served as wings to bear the gospel far and wide over the earth, and have driven out evil "by the . . . ministry of sacred song."⁷ The hymns written and sung have varied widely in content through the centuries, naturally reflecting in each age the spirit of the religious thought of that time. A century ago when religious leaders devoted themselves to impressing upon their people the certainty of death and the necessity of making preparation for that event, such hymns as,

"Hark from the tombs a doleful sound,
Mine ears attend the cry;
'Ye living men,' come view the ground
Where you must shortly lie.' "⁸

were frequently used.

It would not be necessary to mention this trend of religious thought here were it not for the fact that the hymns for children were of the same type. Dr. Isaac Watts wrote a book of hymns especially for children put into easy language in order that they might be readily understood. Apparently, he thought that the subjects treated as well as the language used were adapted to childhood, but to us it seems incredible that children should ever have been expected to take such sentiments upon their lips. One hymn, entitled "Heaven and Hell," after describing in the

⁷ *God and Music*, John Harrington Edwards. Used by permission.

⁸ Isaac Watts.

first verse the heaven to which holy children will go, proceeds:

"There is a dreadful hell,
And everlasting pains;
There sinners must with devils dwell,
In darkness and in chains."

Here is one, entitled "The Danger of Delay."

"Why should I say, 'Tis yet too soon,
To seek for heaven, or think of death'?
The flower may fade before 'tis noon,
And I this day may lose my breath."

Of the children who jeered at Elisha it is said,

"God quickly stopped their wicked breath,
And sent two raging bears,
That tore them limb from limb to death,
With blood and groans and prayers."

One hates to think of the dreams that must have visited the defenseless young who were taught these "Divine and Moral Songs."

A large number of the hymns in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were doctrinal, introspective, and strongly individualistic. One finds most of the pages in the hymnals of those times fairly bristling with repetitions of the personal pronoun I. The prayer hymns are largely individual petitions for personal blessings.

While these statements are true in general about the hymns of yesterday there were many great hymns in that period as well as earlier that could not be classified under any of the three heads mentioned above, some of which have persisted through the centuries because they voice feelings and desires common

to Christians of all climes and all ages. "Fairest Lord Jesus" has been sung since 1677. "O Come, All Ye Faithful," and "Let Us With a Gladsome Mind" are also seventeenth-century hymns. "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" was written in 1529. "Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain" dates back to about 750, and the prayer hymn written by Clement of Alexandria about the year 200 A. D., beginning, "Shepherd of Tender Youth," is the earliest known hymn of the Christian Church.

HYMNS OF TO-DAY

"The Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness." It is most heartening to turn from the past to the best of the hymnals which guide the song of the church to-day. We find in them a note of joy:

"Joyful, joyful we adore thee,
God of Glory, God of Life."

There are many expressions of delight in praise:

"We praise thee, O God, our Redeemer, Creator."
"Light of the World, we hail thee."

Trust and assurance take the place of fear: "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," "I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus."

The love of God for his children is emphasized: "God Speaks to Us in Bird and Song," "How Strong and Sweet My Father's Care," "This Is My Father's World."

And there are many through which the worshiper voices his love and adoration with deepest reverence.

"Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!

Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee."

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Love for others is expressed in hymns of brotherhood and service such as:

"At length there dawns the glorious day
By prophets long foretold;
At length the chorus clearer grows
That shepherds heard of old."

"The day of growing brotherhood
Breaks on our eager eyes,
And human hatreds flee before
The radiant eastern skies."

"O Zion, Haste, Thy Mission High Fulfilling," and
the prayer in "America the Beautiful,"

"America, America,
God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood,
From sea to shining sea."

Ebenezer Elliott was a half century at least ahead of his contemporaries when he wrote, early in the nineteenth century, what was probably the first hymn to voice a social message,

"When wilt thou save the people,
O God of Mercy, when?
Not kings and lords, but nations!
Not thrones and crowns, but men!
Flowers of thy heart, O God, are they;
Let them not pass, like weeds, away,
Their heritage a sunless day,
God save the people!"

In this newer day we have open to us a great and constantly growing treasury of sacred lyrics that reflect the social emphasis of twentieth-century religious thought.

AN OPPORTUNITY AND A DANGER

The Wide Use of Hymns. There is no other lyric poetry that is read by millions as are the hymns of the churches of all creeds. Doctor Reeves in his book, *The Hymn as Literature*, previously quoted, calls attention to the fact that the largest single edition of any merchantable book in the United States up to 1912 was the first edition of a volume of lyrical verse, a hymn book, and the enormous first edition of that book was followed in the same year by two other printings. By 1920 the sale had reached over two million copies. But large as these figures are they have been far exceeded in England, where, before the beginning of the World War, sixty million copies had been sold of a hymnal entitled *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. When one considers that these are only two out of the great number of hymnals issued and used by different denominations and various branches of the church, it is evident that hymns are, without question, the most popular kind of lyric poetry. This large demand affords to denominations and publishers of high grade an unparalleled opportunity for presenting to the church at large everywhere the finest available materials for worship. But unfortunately a field so prolific as this is a temptation to publishers without high ideals to issue cheap books inferior in every particular to compete with the higher-class and higher-priced books. Churches and Sunday schools that have little money to spend have been caught by the low-price bait and in so doing have vitiated the taste of their people and given them stones for bread.

Need for Careful Selection. Since there are great differences in the value of the books offered for sale, caution must be exercised by leaders in religious education. The fact that whatever book is chosen will be used probably for years, and that the material it contains will do much to mold taste, set standards of appreciation, and influence the emotional life of developing youth, puts a tremendous responsibility upon those who select a book for use in any section of the church school. When the reaction from the older type came, the pendulum swung far the other way and gospel hymns were born. Some of these were fine and are certain of immortality, but many were lacking in content, contained vain repetitions, and were not good poetry. Whatever may be the value of the best of them elsewhere they were not prepared to be used in educating the young and should not be included in books intended for use in the Sunday school.

In the wake of the gospel song came a swarm of verses which violate the rules of grammar and prosody, are couched in wretched English, and in many cases lack both sense and meaning. Some of them would be ludicrous if the purpose for which they are used were not so vitally important. It is unfortunate when adults permit themselves to degrade a service of worship with inanities and call them hymns. It is tragic when those who are set to nurture the young in the way of life feed them upon such husks. Here is a verse taken from an ambitious book said to be "For use in the Sabbath School, Christian Endeavor, prayer and brotherhood meetings, the church and the home":

"Let this be my pleading, before the white throne,
When I for the judgment shall be;
No merit have I, but Jesus thy Son,
He careth for even like me."

Some of the songs of this type that are definitely indicated for use with children are worse than any of the others. In one such the reiterated assertion of the chorus is, "It never pays to be bad," and the reason assigned is, "It makes you feel so mean inside." Another has a spelling exercise for a chorus,

"G—double O—D, Good,
G—double O—D, Good,
I want to be like Jesus,
G—double O—D, Good."

These samples are sufficient to show that the millennium has not yet dawned in the realm of poetry intended for use in worship, and that there is still much need for care in making selections of songbooks for juniors. In any book chosen for use in a Junior Department, the hymns should be lyric poems of sufficient beauty to be read or recited with satisfaction and profit to reader or listener.

SUGGESTIONS TO GUIDE IN CHOOSING HYMNS

The words and ideas should be a little above rather than below the junior's plane. There is no time in life perhaps which finds the individual more eager to "stretch forward to the things that are before" and "forget the things that are behind." A first-year junior telling of something that had happened in his last year in the Primary Department explained, with great scorn for his own previous immaturity, "But

that was when I was a kid." He cares less for songs of brooks and flowers and butterflies and more for hymns that are virile and heroic. And this forward reach should be encouraged and strengthened by giving him hymns that his mind must sometimes stand on tiptoe to reach.

Hymns voicing such attitudes as those of praise, loyalty, fidelity, heroism, good will, service, and a deepening consciousness of the rule of God in his world will best help the child in his religious growth.

Such doctrinal hymns as, "There is a fountain filled with blood," and hymns based upon symbolism as is "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me," are clearly unfitted for use with juniors. "Peace, Perfect Peace" is ideal for adults but it is of the meditative type which has no appeal for children. Introspection has no place in child life, therefore "When My Love to God Grows Weak" and all similar hymns are not on the junior list.

"Dear Lord and Father of Mankind" has been given in some books as a hymn for juniors, but there is only one verse (the second) that they could understand, and that should not be used unless they really wished to be followers of Jesus. Hymns that express longings to go to heaven cannot possibly be true when sung by juniors.

"I'm sighing for that country,
My heart is aching here,
There is no pain in the homeland
To which I'm drawing near."

What normal child ever had any such feeling as is expressed in "The Homeland" and similar other-

worldly hymns? This is a very real and delightful world as the junior sees it, and he is so busy getting acquainted with it that he has no time to speculate about the future and no desire to exchange his present existence for any other, however delightful and perfect it may be. Yet thousands of juniors in times past have declared with complete mendacity that they longed to be angels, and some have been heard to assert, when they knew nothing of life's trials and tribulations, that they

"Would not live alway and ask not to stay
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way."

Laura Spencer Portor, writing *On the Mystification of Children*, says of her Sunday-school experience:

"The hymns, not to speak of the invocations and instruction, did so abound in the extraordinary and unlikely that from the opening one to the last, one's feet, so to speak, never once touched solid ground. . . . We stood indoors, for instance, little children without umbrellas, and with the sincere hope that it would not rain, singing in enthusiastic chorus:

'Mercy drops round us are falling;
But for the showers we plead.'

"We united in mysteries as to 'lower lights' that were to be 'kept burning' along some shore that never was or could be, and as to 'sheaves' that were to be brought in, rejoicing, from I do not know whose fields; certainly not ours, as we owned none. To the accompaniment of a piano, little though we were and inexperienced in despair and desperation, we voiced

that unthinkable longing, contrary, I believe, to every instinct of child nature, 'Oh, to be nothing, nothing!' ”⁹

In talking with a fourteen-year-old boy recently the writer asked concerning the hymns that he liked. He mentioned a few and then said, "I have never cared very much about the words of hymns because I didn't think they were true." Questioned as to what he meant, he said, "Well, when I was a junior we used to sing, 'I Love to Tell the Story' very often, and when I looked around at the people singing it I thought there weren't very many of them that had ever told the story to anybody and so they could not 'love to tell the story.' There were other hymns, too, which I knew I could not sing and mean the words, so I made up my mind that hymns weren't intended to say just what you meant but were used simply to make it possible for the people to sing." There can be no doubt but that the practice which has been in vogue in many schools for a long time would arouse just such ideas in the mind of any thoughtful boy or girl. The hymns have been used simply as a medium for song, not because the words expressed thoughts and feelings which the participants in the service wished to voice at that time.

It is essential that the main body of the language shall be within the apprehension of the children and the desires and sentiments expressed those that boys or girls can truthfully utter as their own. Many Sunday-school songbooks, and even some prepared for junior departments, make it necessary for children

⁹ *The Century Magazine*, January, 1921. The Century Co. Used by permission.

who use them to say in song what they must know is untrue if they think of the meaning at all. How can one worship the God of truth through falsehood? And how can the children approach God in sincerity if we make them hypocrites by the words we put in their mouths?

THE USE OF HYMNS

Elimination of Stanzas. Not only the hymn as a whole but every stanza of each hymn should be carefully scrutinized. One of the hymns that juniors always sing with delight is "Faith of Our Fathers," and the first and third stanzas are admirably adapted for junior use. But the second is not. No child could consider it a "sweet fate" to be burned at the stake or to suffer any other form of martyrdom, and it may well be questioned whether all the adults who sing those words really mean what they say.

"Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me" is a popular hymn with juniors, and again two of the verses are fine for their use. But the third beginning,

"When at last I near the shore,
And the fearful breakers roar,"

has a message of fear in relation to death which should never be given to children.

Stressing the Content of Hymns. The materials used in worship can never be of the highest value unless they are both understood and appreciated. The words of hymns probably more than any other part of the worship program have failed in their mission because of ignorance of their meaning and consequent lack of interest. A few suggestions are given

here concerning ways in which hymns may be made significant in the lives of juniors.

All new hymns should be read by the department or by the leader while the pupils follow the words in the book. As this is done comment on the meaning of the words may be made by leader, teachers, and children. Where there is no book in use in the department the words of the hymns should be printed and put up where all can see them.

Occasionally the story of the hymn that is to be sung or a few words about the author will help to stimulate interest in the hymn and give its message an open sesame to the minds of the children. "Fling Out the Banner" is a popular missionary hymn and is often sung after the salute has been given to the Christian flag. It was written by Bishop George Washington Doane, who has been called the "Missionary Bishop of America." The inspiration for the hymn came from Psalm 60. 4:

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee,
That it may be displayed because of the truth."

In our Christian flag God has given us a banner which stands for a greater truth and a more joyful message than any other banner ever given to the world. It is the banner of Christ that Bishop Doane was thinking of when he wrote the hymn; it is his banner that fires our hearts with love and new devotion as we sing the words he wrote.

When the words of the hymn express an avowal of a determination to follow a certain line of conduct, the meaning of the words should be stressed in order that no one may take upon his lips a promise that he does not intend or desire to keep. Many of

our hymns contain positive statements concerning acts or intentions which are manifestly untrue if uttered by those who have not done or do not mean to do what is indicated. When the deeds are those that a junior would normally perform, and the resolves the sort he might naturally make, all that is needed generally is to call special attention to the meaning of the words.

"When morning gilds the skies
My heart awaking cries,
May Jesus Christ be praised"

was the hymn that was to be sung. With evident feeling, the superintendent spoke of what a beautiful thing it would be if each morning the first thought of every person there might be, "May Jesus Christ be praised." "Shall we all try to make this our waking thought every day this week, and in our work as well as our prayer turn to him for strength and guidance?" The hymn introduced in that way could not fail to be sung with intense earnestness and deep feeling.

"Just as I am, thine own to be,
Friend of the young, who lovest me,
To consecrate myself to thee,
O Jesus Christ, I come."

To use such a hymn as that merely as an exercise in singing is sacrilegious, and yet so many times children are permitted to drift along on the melody of the tune uttering words with no thought of their meaning. This hymn of consecration should never be sung without some such introduction as this: "Let us read together softly the first verse of this hymn.

We teachers are glad to say those words. Read the second stanza. You see that is not suited to those of us who are grown up, for the 'morning of our day' has passed. But how glad we are that we did give our lives to Jesus in the morning of life." After the other verses are read the leader may ask all who really would like to say these words to Jesus to join in singing them. This gives an opportunity for those who are not moved by the appeal of the hymn to refrain from singing it, and emphasizes for all the meaning wrapped up in it.

CHOICE OF HYMNS FOR MEMORIZATION

Value of Memorized Hymns. During the junior period the children should commit to memory a number of the great hymns of the church. The growing popularity of this form of verse makes it desirable that the children become conversant with the best it has to afford in order that they may have a point of contact with worshiping groups. It is important for the enrichment of their own lives also. Many a child has been awakened to an appreciation of poetry through the lilt and beauty of some hymn. A correspondent writing to Mr. Stead asserted that when he was only a youngster at school Addison's hymn, "The Spacious Firmament on High," had more attraction for him than a story in the Arabian Nights, and another correspondent says, "At eight this hymn first taught me what poetry meant."¹⁰

"The awakening to poetry is an event in a boy's or a girl's emotional life, a landmark in the formation

¹⁰ *Hymns that Have Helped*, W. T. Stead. Doubleday, Page & Co. Used by permission.

of character, second in importance only to religious conversion, very similar to it in kind and in the depth of its effects, and very similar to it in suddenness and unexpectedness."¹¹

It is probable that many who read Mr. Black's statement will not be ready to agree unreservedly with his assertion concerning the transcendent significance of the awakening to poetry, but if it is true in any measure, the selection of hymns for children to learn becomes a matter calling for much earnest consideration. The first requisite is that the hymn shall have in it some thought a child can understand or voice an experience common in child life. The hymn will always be, in some sense, above the grade of the child's experience and attainments, but if there is something in it that he can grasp, he will be helped and inspired by sentiments that he cannot fully understand. The hymn "Nearer, My God, to Thee," for example, expresses some aspirations that are not possible to a child, but he comprehends and makes his own the prayer that he may be kept near to God. The story of Jacob's vision illuminates phraseology that would not be understood without it, and the hymn as a whole may well have a place in our junior list.

Stories and Word Pictures. A hymn that tells a story such as "Once in Royal David's City," or those that are full of word pictures are always best for juniors, since children cannot grasp a truth unless it is presented in concrete form. Read slowly, "Now the Day Is Over," "The Lord Is My Shepherd, I Shall

¹¹ *Boys and Poetry*, Matthew Wilson Black. *Scribner's Magazine*, November, 1925. Used by permission of the author.

Not Want," "O Lord of Heaven, and Earth, and Sea," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "There's a Song in the Air," "Angels Holy, High and Lowly," and see how the pictures follow one another all the way through. An artist could illustrate every line of such hymns and sometimes every phrase.

There is a peculiar fascination about Carlyle's Morning Hymn.

"So here hath been dawning
Another blue day.
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away?"

"The Spacious Firmament on High," already alluded to, "For the Beauty of the Earth," "This Is My Father's World," "Fairest Lord Jesus," "There's a Song in the Air"—when we have all these and many others equally beautiful and well adapted to enrich the religious life of juniors, why should we ever choose anything less worthy? Fortunately, in selecting hymns suited to arouse the interest and challenge the admiration of boys and girls, the junior leader is not limited to a selection between the covers of any one hymnal but may take the best to be found anywhere in the hymnology of the Christian Church.

Characteristics of Hymns for Juniors. There are certain types of hymns that appeal mightily to juniors:

Stirring calls to action such as are voiced in, "True-hearted, Whole-hearted"; "Dare to Be Brave, Dare to Be True"; "Onward, Christian Soldiers"; "Who Is on the Lord's Side?" "Marching With the Heroes."

Expressions of service, brotherhood, and good will: "O Zion, Haste," "If You Cannot on the Ocean," "O

Brother Man, Fold to Thy Heart Thy Brother"; "There Is Beauty All Around When There's Love at Home," "Loving Words Will Cost But Little," "My Master Was a Worker, With Daily Work to Do"; "The Fathers Built This City," "Hear, Hear, O Ye Nations, and Hearing Obey."

Hymns telling of God's love, his nearness and care: "Nearer, My God, to Thee"; "The King of Love My Shepherd Is," "God Is Love, His Mercy Brightens," "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy."

Adoration and praise: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty," "Fairest Lord Jesus," "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come," "Light of the World We Hail Thee."

God at work in the world of nature: "This Is My Father's World," "Long Ago the Lilies Faded," "For the Beauty of the Earth," "We Plow the Fields and Scatter," "Summer Suns Are Glowing" (first and second verses).

Patriotic hymns: "America the Beautiful," "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," "God of Our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand."

PREPARING FOR MEMORIZATION

When a hymn has been chosen that the children are to be asked to memorize, first read, or, better still, recite it in their hearing, then take it up line by line to see that the meaning is perfectly understood. Give typewritten copies to the children and let them read the verses in concert, being careful that the tone and emphasis are in accord with the meaning of the words. Tell something about the author, binding his or her name so firmly to the hymn that the two can-

not easily be put asunder. Facts about the circumstances under which the hymn was written or concerning its use and influence will serve to enrich the study of the hymn preparatory to memorization.

It is not best for children to memorize hymns by singing the words. To do that involves the memory so completely with the music that the words cannot be recalled unless they are sung. The words will be sung with greater appreciation and understanding if they are first studied and learned as any poem would be.

Perhaps the best way to sum up this part of our chapter is by paraphrasing some questions in a book on worship recently issued.

"Is this hymn we have chosen for the children to memorize real? Is it true in itself? Is it true for the children? Is there anything in the life of Christian children to which it corresponds, and which it will help the children to say out, simply and directly to God and each other? If it is thus real, well and good. It stands approved."¹²

Assignment

Take the following list of hymns, which can be found in almost any church hymnal, and decide in the case of each whether or not you would use it with juniors. If your decision is affirmative, would you omit verses, and why? Select carefully the verses to be left out, formulate clearly your reasons for the decision in each case and be ready to defend your position in the class discussion.

¹² *Reality in Worship*, Willard S. Sperry. The Macmillan Company. Used by permission.

Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart.
Sweet Hour of Prayer.
While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night.
Work, for the Night Is Coming.
There's a Wideness in God's Mercy.
O Day of Rest and Gladness.
Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us.
Oh! Where Shall Rest Be Found?
Oh! Worship the King, All Glorious Above.
Art Thou Weary, Art Thou Languid.
Come, Ye Disconsolate.
Lead On, O King Eternal.
Oh! It Is Hard to Work for God.
Courage, Brother, Do Not Stumble.
We've a Story to Tell to the Nations.
All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name.
Day Is Dying in the West.
I Was a Wandering Sheep.
Now the Day Is Over.
He Leadeth Me; O Blessed Thought!
Father, Whate'er of Earthly Bliss.
In the Cross of Christ I Glory.
My Master Was a Worker.
From Every Stormy Wind That Blows.
My Faith Looks Up to Thee.
Rock of Ages.
Jesus, Lover of My Soul.
Onward, Christian Soldiers.
Hark! the Herald Angels Sing.
O Beautiful for Spacious Skies.
Joy to the World, the Lord is Come.
O Jesus, I Have Promised.
Sunset and Evening Star.

Ask at least three junior children what hymns they like best, and take the list to class for comparison with other lists.

When this book was in manuscript form one who read it for criticism objected to the statement that no hymn should be given to juniors to sing if it is not of sufficient value to be read or recited as a poem. What is your opinion? Give reasons for your answer.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

Jeremiah Bascom Reeves—*The Hymn as Literature*.

Chapter IX, "Import of the Hymn-Book."

Carl F. Price—*One Hundred and One Hymn Stories*.

Louis F. Benson—*Studies of Familiar Hymns*.

W. T. Stead—*Hymns That Have Helped*.

Elizabeth Colson—*Hymn Stories*.

Worship programs for juniors built around the stories of twelve hymns.

CHAPTER VI

MUSIC, VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL

FORE-EXERCISE

WHAT hymn tunes do you like best of all that you know?

Answer these questions in regard to each one of these favorites: Is your fondness for the tune because of pleasing early associations with its use? Is it solely the tune that you enjoy—that is, would the tune make as great an appeal to you if it were associated with words other than those you are accustomed to use or with no words at all?

A student in a university drifted into the chapel attracted by the sound of the organ. Strains from Bach, Beethoven, and Mendelssohn filled the air with melody as he sat there alone and held him entranced. Suddenly the organ crashed into the mighty pæan of the "Hallelujah Chorus," from the Messiah. The young man had never before heard the Messiah or any selections from it, but was so stirred by the appeal of the music that he involuntarily rose to his feet and stood to meet the waves of harmony that so thrilled his soul. He went out from that place strengthened and empowered for life's battles and the experience is one that he will never forget. Have you ever had any similar experience while listening to instrumental music? If so what was the type of music that produced this effect?

THE SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INFLUENCE OF MUSIC

Fellowship with God and Man. Music has in it the essence of the two great commandments. A celebrated French philosopher asserted that "the supreme aim of art as of morals is to raise the individual out of himself and to identify him with his race." If we concur in this view we will have to concede that music is the fulfillment of all the arts, since it reaches this ideal more nearly than any of the others. It is in its very nature the heritage of all humanity, for in some form lower or higher it is found in the social activities of all peoples.

But music has a greater power than this. It not only arouses in the individual a sense of fellowship with other people but it also brings him into the place of communion with the living God. "It is of the very nature of Him who is a Spirit and seeks in his children spiritual affinity and response." It is impossible here to do more than mention the incalculable value of music in the religious life of man. Many volumes would be required even to sketch the story of its influence. Music at its best is pre-eminently a Christian art. "Music is irresistible. Its charities are countless. It stirs the feelings of love, peace, and friendship as scarce any mortal agent can."¹

Dr. James M. Buckley, while taking a pedestrian tour in the mountains of North Carolina for his health, lost his way and found himself at nightfall in an unbroken forest without protection against the wild animals that he knew were to be found there.

¹William Makepeace Thackeray.

He pushed on toward what it seemed might be a clearing and found, as he advanced, that there was a cleared space and a small house in it. This did not give him any reassurance, however, for he had been warned that there were some people living in those mountains who would not hesitate to rob a traveler, and some even had been suspected of murder. While debating whether he would be safer outside or inside the house he walked toward the light coming from a window and as he did so was surprised to hear sounds of music. The melodion was wheezy and out of tune and the singing was rather noisy than musical, but the traveler testified that no anthem or oratorio ever sounded so enchanting to him as did that unharmonious rendering of "Way Down Upon the Suwanee River." He knew that he would be safe within the walls of a house whose members found joy in singing such a song, and his experience proved that his confidence was justified. Refined music cannot keep company with jealousy, resentment, envy, revenge, malice, or hatred which lead inevitably to violations of the law, but it is ever found as the handmaid of joy, faith, hope, love, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control, against which there is no law.

Educates the Emotions. Music both stimulates and trains the emotions. There has been a tendency in the past to consider intellect as superior to and master of the emotions. Such a theory assumes that "When men are taught what is right they will do what is right; that a proposition intellectually accepted will be morally operative." The truth is, "Were it fully understood that the emotions are the

masters and the intellect the servant, it would be seen that little can be done by improving the servant while the masters remain unimproved. Improving the servant does but give the masters more power of achieving their ends."² It has been asserted by many leaders in the realm of music that the future mission in music for the masses is the discipline of the emotions.

Thousands of years ago the Egyptians ascribed medicinal qualities to music. The philosophers of the Persians and the Greeks believed that it had power to cure mind and body alike. In modern times music is being used in many hospitals as an aid in the relief and cure of many illnesses and to help patients to bear a surgical operation in which no anæsthetic can be used. As this practice is increasing it may be assumed that music has a soothing effect especially upon the nervous system. It is certain that music has an unrivaled power to give soundness, vitality, and equilibrium to the emotions which furnish the motive power of life.

Music in Religious Education. But there is no sphere in which the potency of music is more plainly seen than in the service of religion, and its influence knows no bounds of race or class. "It speaks to men of all races, of all tongues, and of all nationalities in tones understood of all and in a language which appeals more immediately and more directly to the imagination than perhaps any other of the arts."³

Luther spoke of music as "the most magnificent present of God to men," and his Reformation was

² *Facts and Comments*, Herbert Spencer. D. Appleton & Company. Used by permission.

³ An address at the Welsh Eisteddfod by Arthur Balfour.

carried on the wings of song. Among the early Methodists Charles Wesley's hymns were quite as compelling as John Wesley's sermons. "He has won more men for the kingdom of God through his singing than he ever influenced through his preaching," said someone of an evangelist. "To engender and diffuse faith, and to promote spiritual well-being are among the noblest aims of music." So said the great composer, Sebastian Bach. And the Music Committee of the Chelsea, Massachusetts, Public Schools gave this testimony in its report of 1883: "Every child is made the better for participating in musical exercises with a conscious ability. His spiritual nature is broadened and deepened unconsciously, and thus made more painfully sensitive to the assaults of evil, and much more ready to welcome benign influences for good."

Music provides an adequate medium of expression for the highest and most intense emotions. It was during the Civil War. It became known in Boston that news had been received from the front and, as they always did at such times, the citizens flocked in great crowds to Faneuil Hall. The news was that Richmond had fallen, and when this was announced the air was filled with shouts and sobs of joy as the war-weary people saw in this event a promise of the end of the conflict. Hats and handkerchiefs and even canes and umbrellas were thrown into the air. Then, seeing that Frederick Douglass was in the hall, they called for him to speak, and he was passed to the platform by eager hands over the shoulders of the densely packed crowd. As he stood facing the people there was a moment of tense silence and then he

started to sing, "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord," and in a moment the building fairly rocked with the volume of sound as the people found a vent for their intense emotions through music. In no other way than through music could that pent-up feeling have found satisfaction.

August 31, 1925, two planes left San Francisco to fly to Hawaii. From one of them no messages were received after the second day when they sent out word that they were running out of gas and that the plane would be broken in pieces if it had to come down in the rough water where they then were. There were five men on board and as soon as it was realized that they were in grave danger, warships, airplanes, and submarines were sent to search for them but without success. After eight days even the officers of the navy gave up all hope of ever finding either the plane or the men. Then, three days later (September 10), the plane with the five men floating in it, all alive and well, was discovered by a submarine.

Under the heading, "Where We Turn When All Other Words Fail," the Newark (N. J.) Evening News of September 12, 1925, printed an editorial of which this is a part:

"'Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow'—once more this grand old hymn has been taken up spontaneously as the only fitting means of expressing a spirit of thankfulness too deep for any other words. Officers of the navy, dining in a hotel in Honolulu, stood in spellbound silence when the amazing news was announced of the finding of the lost sea-plane and the rescue of the five men who had been

given up as lost. What could be said? How could they voice the emotion that had dazed them? Then someone started to sing the Doxology and in a moment everybody present took it up, pouring forth his pæan of thanksgiving.

"Perhaps no song in our language is so generally known as this old Long Meter Doxology. Week after week it is sung in the churches, . . . yet it never grows trite. When some overwhelming occasion of rejoicing comes we would stand dumb if those simple words 'Praise God' did not spring into our minds and upon our lips, and we sing them with the faith and fervor of a child."

"Words are but poor interpreters in the realm of emotion. When all words end, music begins; when they suggest, it realizes; and hence the secret of its strange, ineffable power."⁴

"Far on the deep there are billows,
That never shall break on the beach,
And I have heard songs in the silence
That never shall float into speech,"⁵

sang a far-visioned poet, for music has the power to express emotions that are too deep for words. This fact is of great significance in relation to junior children. In this age their emotions are easily aroused but their power of expression is limited. Through the music of our best hymns and songs, even more than through the words, a normal mode of expression is found and the resulting satisfaction deepens the impression that has been made.

⁴ *Music and Morals*, Hugh R. Haweis. Harper & Brothers. Used by permission.

⁵ Father Ryan, in "The Song of the Mystic." P. J. Kennedy and Sons. Used by permission.

The Musical Setting of Hymns. The influence of the music is much more potent and compelling than the message carried by the words. Doubtless many who read this statement will disagree with it, as was the case with the majority of those present at the Elementary Institute of the International Convention held in Denver in 1902. In order to test the matter an experiment was made. The five hundred teachers assembled there were asked to repeat the words of the first verse of "Joy to the World, the Lord Is Come." Attention was called to the marvelous meaning wrapped up in those words, impregnated as they are with all the gladness of the gospel message. They were then asked to sing that verse and while singing not to think of the music but to keep their attention fixed upon the gladness of the words. The tune used was Naomi, and as the last notes died away everyone in the room found himself under the spell of the sadness of the music, in spite of the fact that each person had made a conscious effort to keep in accord with the joyousness of the words.

Children have suffered more than older people from incongruous settings for the words they were asked to sing. The Lord's Prayer has been sung to music that can only be fitly described as a two-step. A prayer beginning, "Dear Redeemer, Jesus Holy," was set to a rollicking march tune and the children were expected to *march* as they *prayed* and *sang*! If the music is unworthy, it matters not how fitting the words. Their message will never reach the heart and the mind of the children. But when the music sings what the words say, the truth of the hymn will find a sure abiding place in the souls of those who sing.

Characteristics of Hymn Tunes for Juniors. In hymns and songs for children melody rather than harmony should be predominant. The due arrangement of single notes is the simplest form of music but it is also the form best adapted to stir the emotions. It is desirable to have a background of harmony but with a melody that stands out clearly, the composition as a whole being characterized by movement, color, and richness.

Music has a language of its own and speaks directly to the emotions. It is possible, therefore, to select music which expresses the sentiment of the words for which it provides a setting. When this is done the message is magnified and its influence mightily augmented.

A defect which frequently prevents the free movement of a hymn and hampers expression is found when the music does not conform in phrasing to the meaning of the words to be sung. It may tell the same story but does not tell it in the same way. Sometimes hymns are found in the best hymnals that bring the accent of the music on small and unimportant words, or on the unaccented syllable of longer words, and this always weakens the hymn. For example Adelaide Procter's brilliant hymn of thanksgiving beginning, "My God, I thank thee, who hast made the earth so bright," is marred when set to "Wentworth." It jars one's sense of fitness to have to sing "*Beau-ty* and light." "*Circ-ling* us round," and "*No-ble* and right."

When any so-called hymn has an exaggerated rhythm or a preponderance of rhythm over melody it appeals to the muscles rather than to the emotions,

and cannot be made a medium for worship training. There are many examples of this type, unhappily, in circulation to-day, and the leader of juniors has need to exercise care that the children may be protected from music which is inherently sensual rather than spiritual. The hymnals of our fathers surely could not be accused in general of harboring frivolous music. But it is a curious fact that "Duane Street,"⁶ with its heavy rhythm and lack of spiritual meaning, was included in some hymnals of the last century and is still found in at least one widely used and otherwise dignified and well-chosen collection.

THE IMMORTALITY OF MUSIC

Music once admitted to the soul becomes a sort of spirit and never dies.

"To song God never said the word,
"To dust return, for dust thou art.'"⁷

Many prodigals who have wandered far from home and its teaching and ideals have been called back to all three by hearing the melody of a hymn that had been woven into the fibers of their souls in days gone by. Christians who have kept the faith also owe much to the influence of sacred songs.

"Their melody has haunted the ear amid the murmur of the mart and the roar of the street. In the storm and stress of life's battle the echo of their sweet refrain has renewed our strength and dispelled our fears."⁸

⁶ Composed by George Coles (1792-1858).

⁷ John Dryden.

⁸ *Hymns That Have Helped*, W. T. Stead. Doubleday, Page & Co. Used by permission.

There are few adults who have not at some time been surprised to hear a long-forgotten melody singing itself into consciousness when there was apparently nothing to evoke its recall. This tenacity of life on the part of music places a tremendous responsibility upon those who select the music that juniors are to sing.

If an angel were to appear to some junior superintendent and say, "To you is delegated the task of choosing life companions for all of these children," with what a deep sense of obligation would that choice be made! Is it because there is no supernatural visitor to call attention to the importance of the matter that so many children in our religious schools are being bound to a life fellowship with inane and frivolous compositions which can never exert an uplifting influence and which would not be tolerated in the secular schools? Is it not pitiable that the church school should ever set for itself a lower musical standard than that found in our public schools?

THE MUSICAL TASTE OF JUNIORS

The chief reason for the low grade of music used in many church schools is that cheap commercial hymnals have been selected because they are cheap, because the music is "easy to sing," and because, as the leaders assert, the children like it. Children enjoy singing and will like almost any kind of song which they have learned so well that they can sing it easily. If the music selected for Sunday-school use is of a low grade, the type that is sensuous and arouses the baser emotions, the children will un-

doubtedly learn to like that kind. But this is not an indication that they are unable to appreciate the good, but proves that their musical taste has been vitiated by their leaders in the very house of God, where only the highest grade of melody and song should ever be found. Moravian children love Bach chorales not because they are different from other children but because they hear that grade of music from their earliest years.

TYPES OF HYMN TUNES FOR USE WITH JUNIORS

Stimulating. It has sometimes been said that music for juniors should always be martial and virile. It is true that this type of music makes a powerful appeal to juniors and is of great value in educating them religiously. For example, what an inspiration to loyalty has been found in the music of George C. Stebbins' hymn written for Frances Havergal's words, "True-hearted, Whole-hearted."⁹ J. G. Walton's music has a more quiet but none the less effective influence as through it juniors sing of the "Faith of Our Fathers." Calkins' setting for "Fling Out the Banner" has in its rhythm the very motion of the waving banner and in its content a stimulus to missionary effort. The music of Mrs. Knowlton's

"For peace and for plenty, for freedom, for rest,
For joy in the land from the east to the west,"

sings what those words say and is one of the most adequate songs of patriotic thanksgiving that has ever been written for juniors. Adam Geibel's ar-

⁹ *Services and Songs for Use in the Junior Department of the Church School*, page 48. Most of the hymns mentioned below can be found in any of the standard hymnals. They are all in the book referred to here.

range for that stirring hymn, "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus" gives a clarion call to service that supplements and intensifies the emotion of the words. That old but ever-new anthem of exultant praise from *Lyra Davidica* to which the Easter hymn, "Jesus Christ Is Risen To-day," has been sung for two hundred years, stirs the hearts of juniors with joy and thanksgiving. Sullivan's tune for "Onward, Christian Soldiers," makes it easy for boys and girls to sing that hymn with enthusiasm and contributes in large measure to the impression it makes.

Silver-toned. But juniors cannot express all the feelings normal to worship or be adequately trained emotionally through any one kind of music. Love, and reverence for God, and gratitude to him can be engendered and expressed through music, and children find great satisfaction as well as help for right living in the sweet melodies of the more quiet songs.

Dyke's setting for "Holy, Holy, Holy," and W. F. Sherwin's for "Day Is Dying in the West," Hervey's litany, "Jesus Once an Infant Small," J. R. Murray's perfectly adapted music for "How Strong and Sweet My Father's Care!" J. Yates Peek's setting for "I Would Be True, for There Are Those Who Trust Me," and "Hear Our Prayer, O Lord," by George Whelpton, are examples of this type.

THE VALUE OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Far too little use has been made in our church schools of the influence that is exerted when appropriate and well-rendered selections of instrumental music are played as a part of the service of worship. Some attempts have been made in this direction, but

in many cases they have been abortive because the music was used simply as a call to order and so became not a part of the service of worship but an introduction to it, or a sound-maker to hide the noise of conversation preceding the worship service. Many department leaders who have wished to make use of the "Song of worship without words" have been prevented from doing so by the difficulty that has been experienced in finding selections of high grade which were at the same time so simply arranged that the average pianist in a Junior Department could play them. A few schools have overcome this difficulty by having a victrola and presenting short parts of classic compositions in this way. This can never take the place of a selection rendered by a pianist who feels the message of the music and interprets it vitally, but is much better than a composition played by someone who is not interested in it, and whose performance is, therefore, as mechanical as that of any phonograph record could be.

Short Selections. What is played must be reverent in tone, of high grade, but neither long nor elaborate. Junior children cannot, with benefit to themselves, listen to or take part in long prayers, long hymns, or long instrumental selections. Every moment of a prelude to a service of worship that extends beyond three minutes will decrease rather than augment the impression and may nullify it altogether. The character of the selection will naturally be decided by the subject of the service that is to follow.¹⁰

Children Enabled to Identify Compositions. If the

¹⁰ Compare the instrumental music for the service "Joy," page 80 in *Services and Songs for Use in the Junior Department*, and for "Repentance," page 97.

title of the opening selection is placed where the children can see it, with the name of the composer, interest will be aroused, greater attention will be paid, and gradually the members of the department will become familiar with parts of several beautiful classic compositions, which they have learned to love. In a school located in a district where there was a large foreign population, when this plan had been followed for several months, a little Polish girl came to the superintendent before the session to ask, "When does we git Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata once again?" and a boy at her side chimed in, "That's what I want to know about Handel's Largo." Children who have learned to love the music of Beethoven and other master composers will not be interested in the low songs of the street. Their musical taste has been refined and their spiritual nature strengthened. Another value in instrumental selections reverently played at the opening of a service is that they create an atmosphere which makes true worship possible.

Shall We Have an Orchestra? In some Junior Departments an orchestra has been formed, not so much because a need was felt for such aid in the worship as because of a laudable desire to give opportunity for service to such of the members as were able to play on some instrument. This is a fine plan provided the children can play well enough to be able to avoid making discords. But juniors are not generally far enough advanced musically to do good team work even though some intermediates are called in to assist. The writer has seen juniors put their fingers in their ears and show signs of physical distress at the discordant sounds made by an orchestra whose

members were blissfully unconscious of any defect in their performance. The question of the orchestra is easily decided, as is every other question relating to the worship service, on the basis of its value as a means of making the worship more real. Harmony, expression, and understanding are essential. If the orchestra can furnish these, its welcome is assured. If not, no amount of benefit accruing to individual players through an unselfish act of service could atone for thwarting in any degree the purpose of worship.

In orchestras as small as those likely to be found in junior rooms brass instruments should be tabooed. Such instruments were undoubtedly an aid to true worship in the old temple services which were out of doors, but in a small Sunday-school room they have an irritating effect upon the nerves which is not conducive to worship and is akin to the results produced by the large bell with which the superintendent, in years gone by, was wont to make a noise when he desired silence.

CONCLUSION

Because of its uplifting, purifying power and the fact that its use renders the nature more susceptible to righteous influences, music is one of the most cogent of the factors that may be used in religious education. The church which is conscientiously endeavoring to nurture its children for Christian living will make it certain that they are acquainted not only with the best hymn tunes of the present day and those that have come down to us from the singing Christians of the past, but also with many of the

instrumental compositions of the great masters who have had before them the highest ideals of their art. The children will be so familiar with the hymns that they are freed from the tyranny of the mechanics of singing and are able to yield themselves unreservedly to the joy of musical expression.

"Music reaches mind and stirs emotion only through physical media, the voice, fingers, strings, keys, and the sympathetic air. But its effects on thought, feeling, and action are often so astonishingly great that the mechanical energy employed, even allowing for nervous re-enforcement, is utterly inadequate to their production. The physical agency and the spiritual result are disparate; they belong to different realms. . . . Outside of Christendom religious music has hardly shed the primitive animistic character of rhythmic noise, and children's songs are almost unknown. But the Christian religion has found in music a congenial ally, ready to aid its progress in the individual heart and in the world's history. The thought of God, of Christ and his cross, of the Christian graces, and of the immortal life, is entirely consonant with musical expression."¹¹

Assignment

Make a list of the hymn tunes most used in your Junior Department.

What is the character of the music?

If some of the tunes are of the kind popularly described as "catchy," are these special favorites?

Do you consider them of value in educating the child religiously? Give reasons for your answer.

¹¹ *God and Music*, John Harrington Edwards. Used by permission.

Indicate in the list those that seem to you to be most capable of helping the children religiously.

Select three tunes not mentioned in this chapter that you would like to teach to juniors and tell what you think the value of each would be.

Choose three compositions, or parts of compositions, that you would use for instrumental music in the opening service of the Junior Department.

Take your two lists to class for comparison with those made by the other members.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

John Harrington Edwards—*God and Music*.

Chapter VIII, "The Power of Music."

Earnest Pauer—A music primer entitled *The Elements of the Beautiful in Music*.

Betts and Hawthorne—*Method in Teaching Religion*.

Chapter XVIII, "Teaching the Art of Worship."

Weigle and Tweedy—*Training the Devotional Life*.

Chapter IV, "Worship in Music and Song."

Earl E. Harper—*Church Music and Worship*.

Chapter II, "Music and Religion, Their Association."

Chapter III, "Music and Religion, Their Relationship."

CHAPTER VII

THE PRAYER LIFE OF THE CHILD

FORE-EXERCISE

THINK of your own prayer life as a child: How were you helped in the home? What would you do in addition or differently if you were training a child in your home to-day?

Question two of your friends concerning their experience in some such way as this:

What conception of God did you have when you were about nine years old? How did you think of Jesus? Did your prayer life grow deeper and more real to you as you grew older? If so, how were you helped in this phase of your spiritual life? Compare your experience with theirs.

HOW GOD IS REVEALED TO THE CHILD

Through Parental Care. In the earliest years of a child's life the limits of his home represent the confines of his moral universe. His sense of dependence upon his parents marks the beginnings of his religious impulses. The care and protection that they give, the way in which they meet his bodily needs as they arise, put the parents in the place of God to the little child. Often he thinks of his father as being on the same plane with the Deity. Doctor Coe tells of a child who said: "I don't need to say my prayers to-night. Father is going to sleep with me." Another child prayed earnestly that God would take

care of his mother, grandmother, and himself, "until father comes back on Thursday." And still another prayed for all the members of his family except his father and when questioned concerning the omission said, "Why, he can take care of himself."

Very soon, however, the child comes to realize the limitations of his parents both in knowledge and in power. He naturally reaches out for the ideal of wisdom and might, and this innate longing can never be satisfied until his soul and his mind find satisfaction in the knowledge of the loving, omnipotent, and omnipresent Father.¹

By the Child's Environment. It is the teaching of the home and the religious experience of the child in the home which decide in large measure what the child's religious ideas shall be. But even if the home is godless, the child will not be destitute of some kind of religious notions. Doctor Pratt calls attention to the fact that "unless a child is stone deaf and perhaps blind also, it is impossible to withhold religious instruction from him. If his parents do not teach him religious conceptions, his companions will; and if these hold their peace, the very labels on canned goods will break forth into theology." He quotes the following from Earl Barnes' *Theological Life of a California Child*: "One boy says he got his idea of the devil from a Punch and Judy Show, two say their ideas came from pictures on deviled ham, several mentioned the hired girl as authority, and a large number said their ideas came from pictures."²

¹ See *A Psychological Observation*. Lectures in the Training Schools for kindergartners, Elizabeth Peabody.

² *The Religious Consciousness*, James Bissett Pratt. The Macmillan Company. Used by permission.

Sometimes even in homes considered religious entirely wrong conceptions have been acquired. A little girl left by her parents to the care of a ministerial grandfather of the puritanic type thought of God as an all-seeing, powerful Being who was ever on the lookout for evil thoughts, words, or deeds, and who took supreme delight in punishing every deviation from the straight and narrow path. In some way, probably through visits in the homes of other relatives, the child, who was starving for affection, came to know of Jesus as a loving, sympathetic Friend. After that she still pictured God as determined to punish, but in front of him stood Jesus with outstretched arms to prevent the wrath of his and the child's Father from finding the desired expression!

II. G. Wells had a similar experience, for he says, "I thought of him [God] as a fantastic monster perpetually spying, perpetually waiting, perpetually listening to condemn and strike me dead."³

Children are apt to picture concretely any idea of God which has been so forcibly presented as to obscure other teachings on the subject. For instance, in homes where the text "Thou, God, seest me," has been overemphasized as a deterrent to wrongdoing, the child's idea of God has been "a great eye." Children sometimes have said that they thought of God as "an old Man with very large hands." This may have been their attempt to express his willingness and power to help. It is possible that an emphasis upon the ability of God to hear everything led one child to think of him as "a face of a Man with big ears."

³ *God An Invisible King.*

It is inevitable that little children shall have such anthropomorphic conceptions of the Deity, and it is not to be deplored, provided their imaginings are not based upon an entirely erroneous conception of the nature and attributes of God. If the eye means to the child who pictures God in that way a loving watchful care, if the hand is extended to help, if the ear catches even the least of the children's prayers, the child is not hindered in his religious growth by the image he has formed. By the time he has reached the junior age these ideas will have slipped away, and if he has been assisted by precept and example in the home and in the church school he will have gained a more spiritual conception.

But when any child is so unfortunate as to form such a pagan conception of God as that given to H. G. Wells and the little girl previously mentioned, it persists and often warps the religious life for years. In fact, if one ever finds relief from such a mental and spiritual purgatory, it must be through bitter struggle and anguish of soul. It is not probable that many children in this age will have such experiences. The fact that any ever have had them is mentioned to make more vividly apparent the vital importance of giving children such teaching and experience in living that they will be able to form a concept of God having in it nothing contrary to the ideal of justice, mercy, and love.

THE JUNIOR'S GOD

A Present God. The junior who has been well trained in his home and church will sense the presence of God. Indeed, children frequently have this

experience at eight years of age, when there seems to be with many what some writers on religious psychology have called "a preliminary spiritual awakening." A mother "overheard a conversation between her two boys in which the younger asked his older brother (aged eight) how he knew that God heard his prayers. The boy answered, 'Because I feel him in my heart.' There was nothing mysterious about this; he had always been told that God was in him, and his first lesson in religion from his mother had been that God was the part of him that loves."⁴

Twenty-nine out of fifty who answered Doctor Pratt's questions regarding their religious experience insisted that the belief in God's presence, which was quite distinguishable in feeling tone from mere belief, goes back to the twelfth or thirteenth year or earlier. Nearly all say it was a gradual growth, though with a very few it appeared suddenly. "At eight I felt that God was with me. It was with much the same feeling as toward a very dear and trusted friend. I thought God was watching my life and helping me." "One morning when I was praying I felt aware that I was talking to a real Presence in quite a different way from anything I had ever felt before . . . I was twelve then."⁵

The Junior child who is to have a genuine prayer life must have a consciousness of the presence of God, otherwise, God will be to him as he is to many adults to-day, "little more than a foreign correspondent dwelling in some faraway unknown land to be ad-

⁴ *The Religious Consciousness*, James Bissett Pratt. The Macmillan Company. Used by permission.

⁵ *Ibid.*, chapter on the "Religion of Childhood."

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dressed with restraint and sought only in need.”⁶ It makes a tremendous difference when the soul realizes that God is not far away, but near at hand, not a shrouded mystery but a living personality—not an unsympathetic embodiment of power but a loving tender Father.

The Giver of Every Good Gift. Most church-school children think of God as the great Provider from their earliest years, for the Fatherhood of God is constantly taught, and chiefly in relation to his provision for the physical needs of his children. This is as it should be for the little ones. “He who knew more about God than anyone else who ever lived said that the very hairs of our heads are numbered by him, and meant that God cares for us even to the least detail. In the midst of all the innumerable multitudes of men God cares for us as though he and we were alone in the world. The initial purpose of religion is to impress this upon the minds of children. This is a contribution which religion, and religion alone, makes to conduct.”⁷

Building upon this foundation the junior should have a definite realization of the spiritual gifts that come from the heavenly Father: his power to give strength for right doing, and to give courage to meet hard tasks, his willingness to forgive when one has done wrong and is truly sorry. He should have a broader sense of the truth that since God is our Father all of his other children are our brothers and sisters.

⁶ *Humanity and God*, Samuel Chadwick. Fleming H. Revell Co. Used by permission.

⁷ *Training of Children in Religion*, George Hodges. D. Appleton & Co. Used by permission.

The Creator Who Is Still at Work in His World. The junior finds delight in the thought that God is the great Creator and Ruler of the world. He admires power and has genuine respect for authority justly administered by one who has the right to rule. It is therefore to be expected that the junior will begin to realize his reciprocal relation to the "Ruler" as a loyal subject, and to the Father as a son who loves to do his Father's will.

The child should not think of God as sitting idle upon a throne in a far-off heaven, nor of one who is ruling over a finished creation. Jesus said, "My father has gone on working to the present moment; I go on working too."⁸ And to the junior who is the embodiment of activity it is pleasant to think of God as constantly at work in his world. If he has this conception, he will see God in nature everywhere, and know that

His presence makes the spring to blush,
He shines in ample summer's glow,
He kindles autumn's burning bush,
He flings the winter's fleece of snow."⁹

He will come to realize too that God has made it possible for him to have a part in making the world more beautiful and a better place in which to live; that he may indeed be a co-worker with God.

By the time the junior age is reached life has more of prospective than it can have earlier. The children begin to realize something of the greatness of God, his holiness and power. If they have a foundation of

⁸ John 5. 17, *The Twentieth Century New Testament*. Fleming H. Revell Company.

⁹ "Embers": *Hymns and Other Verse*, M. Woolsey Stryker. Used by permission.

respect for people who are worthy of respect, they will have an enlarged concept of God as one to be given the highest place and accorded the greatest reverence.

THE JUNIOR'S CONCEPTION OF JESUS

Difficulty in Differentiating Between Jesus and God. Why is it that there is complete confusion in the minds of a large majority of church-school children concerning Christ and God? Most of them seem to make no distinction, using the names interchangeably, but with a preference for the name of Jesus. Hundreds of answers given by children to questions regarding certain Old Testament characters have been sent to the writer by Sunday-school teachers. In almost every case they describe any man whose character they think worthy by saying, "He was a good Christian" or "He followed Jesus." "Ahab was not any kind of a Christian." "Solomon stopped being a Christian before he died."

How This Difficulty Is Being Overcome. Workers in the younger grades are now teaching their children in such a way that they think of Jesus as a Friend and Helper of little children. It is the humanity of Jesus that is emphasized. They do not have the children pray to Jesus. This method will doubtless do away with much of the fog that has clouded the minds of children in the past, for investigation has shown that where there is confusion it has arisen in most cases from the fact that prayers addressed to Jesus had been used in early childhood. It is a handicap in the religious life of a junior if he has not had some conception of the human Jesus, living the life of a

child, understanding all the difficulties that children have, fighting against evil and winning the fight, growing to manhood, and going about everywhere doing good. With such a conception of the man Christ Jesus, the junior comes easily to see in him the Son of God, a Friend and Leader, the one whom he wishes to follow, the one who, because he has suffered being tempted, is able to succor those who are tempted (Hebrews 20. 18).

THE HOME TEACHING THE CHILD TO PRAY

Using Rote Prayers. Since the home is the little child's moral and religious universe, and since his parents stand in the light of gods to him, the home is the place where the child should be taught to pray and the parents are the ones who should guide him in his prayer life. When this is done by fathers and mothers who know what the normal prayer life of the child is and who are themselves living in a relation of loving dependence upon God, the child's religious ideas and attitudes grow and develop as normally as a flower blooms, and he prays to his heavenly Father with a trust as confident as that he feels when talking with his earthly father about the things which concern him. This is the ideal way for a child to be taught to pray. But the truth is, even in most so-called Christian homes, neither the teaching concerning prayer nor the practice of prayer is such as will make a genuine prayer life possible for the child.

In the ordinary home the children are taught to say a rote prayer. Generally the so-called prayer is "Now I lay me." But to use that prayer is no more

natural for a child than it would be for him to say to his mother at night: "My dear mother, I am about to lie down and go to sleep. I have taken off these clothes that I have worn during the day. I hope you will put them away carefully and have these or some other clothes ready for me in the morning." What would you think of a child who said this not only once but every night to his mother and did not speak to her in any other way at any time? Such a condition is unthinkable. You would say at once that the child who did that must be mentally unbalanced. But is it any more normal for a child to speak to his loving heavenly Father only once a day and then to repeat mechanically a series of words which do not express the heartfelt desires of any child out of the millions who have uttered them? Robert E. Speer has said it is the most selfish form of words ever put together and called a prayer. This criticism is just and would discredit it if nothing else could be said against it. But its greatest condemnation lies in the fact that no child can mean what he is saying as he repeats it.

The Inadequacy of Rote Prayers. When children say rote prayers of any kind they are usually reciting something and not in any real sense talking with God. It is to be doubted whether many of the adults who recite the Lord's Prayer in public services think exactly those thoughts all the way through. The ideas in it stretch around the world in blessing and probe the innermost life of the individual. No one can follow its meaning who does not concentrate attention upon it. But the lips know it so well that the mind is prone to go on an excursion of its own

and let the lips do all that is done. In most churches it is recited at such a rate of speed that, however earnestly one might desire to make the phrases of the prayer something more than a vain repetition, it is impossible to do so. If it is easy for adults to let their thoughts wander, how can we expect a child to *pray* the Lord's Prayer? In fact, few children know what it means. They were taught the words when they were far too young to understand their meaning, and to most juniors it is simply a jumble of syllables. Even if the import of the prayer were understood, it is not one that would be a suitable expression of a junior child's thought and feeling. It was given as a model for adult prayers.

WHAT IS PRAYER FOR A CHILD?

The Expression of a Sincere Desire. It is talking with God about things in which he is interested. The little child is chiefly interested in things, and lives in the realm of the concrete. Even the juniors are only just coming to the place where they begin to sense something of the higher values in life. A child of three had an umbrella given to him for his birthday. This umbrella was his most-prized possession, but after he received it there was a long continued dry spell of weather. After three or four weeks of rainless days he surprised his mother by adding to his prayer at night this petition, "And, dear heavenly Father, won't you please let it rain just a little so that Lawrence can use his new umbrella"—which was a true and perfectly normal prayer for a child of that age.

Another boy of five had a very fortunate home life

and training in prayer. His mother never taught him a rote prayer. When he was too little to talk to God himself, when she put him to bed at night she talked to the heavenly Father about the happenings of the day and he listened. As soon as he began to talk he injected little phrases of his own into the prayer, and soon the talk with God was all his own. One day when his father was away and was to bring a friend home with him his mother said to him in the morning, "Arthur, I think you are too big a boy to spill milk on your tray." That night this was his prayer: "Dear heavenly Father, please help me not to spill my milk on my tray any more. Bring my father home safe and please let Miss Scott come with him, for I like her very much. Thank you for letting Billy come to play with me. Amen." Is that not of more value than the repetition of "Now I lay me" any number of times without thought of the meaning, exactly as parrots or phonographs might say the words?

The prayers of that child broadened and deepened as he grew, keeping pace with his development along all other lines. This was not due simply to the direct teaching of his parents or the training that they gave him in the practice of prayer, but to the atmosphere of the home which was so wholesome that the religious life of the child could not fail to expand normally. Doctor Grenfell, in writing his spiritual autobiography for the British Weekly under the title "What Christianity Means to Me," says: "He [Christ] meant a mother who brought him right into our family life just by doing daily what he would do in her place, and unquestionably into our personal

lives too, even if we were not able to recognize and proclaim the fact vocally in those days even to ourselves.

"In looking back on my youth after many years I have come to feel that this attitude was as it should be. Religion to deserve the title should bear the stamp of normality, and for a boy to have been too introspective about its possession during the days of childhood might have been as undesirable as a similarly attentive attitude to the welfare of his physical digestion, of which it is wisely said he should be quite unconscious."

In a class in Sunday school, after the lesson story had been told, a child asked suddenly, "Where is God?"

"He is right here now," answered another child before the teacher could speak. There was silence for a moment and then the boy added, "We cannot see him though, but we could if we didn't have our bodies on."

That junior had a sense of the presence of God which must have made his prayer life very real to him.

A mother was looking over some old geography papers that her boy had written when he was eleven years old. Among them she found this:

"My Own Prayer

God help me in my studies,
God help me in my play,
God help the pastor and the church,
God help mother, father and all my friends,
With love,
Fred B."

It is no wonder that the mother's heart was touched as she found this evidence that with her boy prayer was something more than a form. It would be interesting to know whether the letter form used at the end was suggested by the fact that the boy was writing, or whether it is an indication that he did not have a personal sense of the nearness of God.

Two junior girls were talking about for what and whom they prayed, and one of them said, "I pray for all the people I love, and then I pray for those I don't like and for all I don't know." This certainly is an all-inclusive prayer, but it shows that the one who offered it realized something of her duty as a child of the heavenly Father toward his other children.

THE JUNIOR'S INTEREST IN TRUE PRAYER

Juniors not only dislike, but despise, forms of words that have no heart or meaning in them. It is for this reason that they seem sometimes quite shockingly irreverent as they rattle off the rote prayers they were taught to say as tiny children, and are still continuing to say. But they are deeply interested in prayer that is genuine, and enjoy studies, conversation, and discussion on the subject. The writer had a week-day class of juniors who were soon to join the church. The subjects chosen were simply the everyday things which children do, and the question asked regarding each was "How will the Christian boy or girl play? work? study? etc." In outlining the course two periods had been allotted to prayer, but the interest of the children was so keen that it was

necessary to devote six periods to it, and even then the children would revert to the subject again and again when other questions were being discussed.

A Christian minister, father of a ten-year-old daughter, said to a friend who is engaged in religious education: "I want to tell you something that happened in our home in which I think you will be interested. My wife found a printed prayer in a paper, and considering it a beautifully worded and appropriate prayer for a child of Jane's age cut it out and gave it to her. When the child saw it she exhibited the most intense interest in it, committed it to memory and used it for about three weeks. Then she came to her mother asking if she knew of another prayer like that that she could have to use. "What surprised us," added the father, "was to see how deep an interest she had in the prayer."

"What have you done for her up to this time in her prayer life?"

"Well," was the hesitating reply, "we taught her to say 'Now I lay me' and, of course, the Lord's Prayer."

"And is that all?"

"Yes, I think so," was the answer.

"Then it is not at all surprising that she was interested in any prayer which gave her a form of expression for desires which were in her heart but which she did not know how to put into words."

In this case it was a rote prayer which awakened the child to a knowledge of what prayer might mean in her life, but it was a child's prayer clothed in suitable language. It is to be noted also that, much as she appreciated it, she outgrew it in three weeks.

Prayer Experience Should Keep Pace with Growth. Progressive instruction and suggestion must be given as the child advances in knowledge and experience. If there is not a constant evolution in the practice of prayer there can be no genuine spiritual development. The delicate growth which we call the religious life must have the sunlight of conscious communion with God and contact with his strength-giving power if it is ever to bloom in beauty and bear the fruits of the Spirit.

HOW CAN THE CHURCH INFLUENCE THE CULTURE OF THE PRAYER LIFE OF THE CHILD IN THE HOME?

Visits. Through frequent visits to the home. These should not be merely social calls in which every subject is discussed except the one most vital to the child. The first calls made at the home will of necessity be devoted to getting acquainted. As soon as this has been accomplished the teacher or superintendent should introduce the subject of the child's prayer life. It would be easy to talk with the parents about "Now I lay me," if that is the prayer that the child is using, and show them why that is not a normal prayer for a child to use. This would lead easily into a conversation on ways in which the home and church together may so guide the child that he will actually *talk with God* as he would with a loving and earthly father.

Conferences. Meetings of parents, teachers, and officers for the avowed purpose of considering the subject of prayer, what it is, and how children may best be taught to pray are of great value. The school that has never held such a conference will be amazed

to find how much help will be given to the parents, themselves, for their prayer life as suggestions are made which are intended solely to assist them in the guidance of their children.

Family Prayers. Emphasis upon the devotional life of the home by the pastor in sermons and personal contact. The family altar of former days is practically unknown in the rush and turmoil of our modern life in spite of many attempts on the part of the church to re-establish it. In some homes where the main purpose seemed to be to read the Bible through from cover to cover, including all the "begats" of Genesis and the lists of hard names in Numbers, Chronicles, and elsewhere, it may well be doubted whether the Word of God so delivered to potential saints made any pleasant or lasting impression upon the children. But the prayer, if it was a genuine approach to the throne of grace, could not fail to draw the whole family closer to God and to each other. Then the practice of deliberately setting aside a certain time each day for worship was of inestimable value. It elevated the highest interests of life to their rightful place in the daily routine. There should be some way in which the very great benefits of daily family prayer might be restored in our Christian homes. There are now many books which give short, vital, and appropriate forms of prayer for such use which solve the problem for parents who think they cannot conduct a service of worship even in the privacy of the family circle. There should be worship through song in the family prayer service, also, and well-chosen hymns, those that voice the natural emotions and desires of chil-

dren as well as adults, will do much to offset the pernicious influence of the jazz music and common if not vulgar words of the songs of the day. These, which were formerly called "songs of the street," have now crept into the center of the home life and may be found in most homes either on the piano or in the records of the victrola.

The children of this day are missing a potent influence toward godliness which their fathers had in a time when ministers of the gospel were freely entertained in the homes of church members. Not only was there a new voice in the family prayer and a different message, but personal religion was often a topic of conversation, the table talk was vital and interesting, and the fascination of a forceful personality was an unconscious but powerful influence. One may well wish, for the sake of the children especially, that there might be a return of the old-fashioned sociability and open hospitality of the days of old which made a prophet's chamber an integral part of every Christian home.

Grace at Table. In a great many homes where there is no religious conviction on the part of the parents, and where they would never think of asking God's blessing upon the meal if they themselves had to say it, they are perfectly willing that one of the children shall offer such a prayer. If at Sunday-school the children are given several forms of blessing to choose from, and urged to use them in the home, there will be a general and delighted response on the part of the children and very little antagonism from the homes. Here are a few forms that have been found by experience to be attractive to juniors:

"Before we eat this food, dear Lord,
We bow our heads to pray;
And for thy love and all thy gifts
Our grateful thanks we say."¹

Thou art great and thou art good,
And we thank thee for our food.
By thy grace must all be fed,
Give us, Lord, our daily bread.²

Father of all in heaven above,
We thank thee for thy love.
Our food, our home and all we wear
Tell of thy loving care.³

For this food and all other good gifts that thou art sending us we thank thee, our Father.

A Church Prayer. Another occasion for which it is desirable to give the child a rote prayer is when he goes to church. Juniors see the people who come into the church service bow the head, and they instinctively assume the same attitude but it is surprising to find how few know the reason for the act. One boy said they were bowing to the altar. Most of them are very much surprised when they learn that the people are praying. A little explanation and discussion should precede the giving of a formal prayer, and the children should be urged and encouraged to word their own prayer taking the model only as a suggestion concerning the subject. But the use of a rote prayer here, and as a grace at table, is less objectionable than it generally is because the ideas expressed would be practically the same always.

¹L. P. McAvoy.

²The Hampton Grace.

³*Song Stories for the Sunday School*, Patty S. and Mildred J. Hill. Clayton F. Summy Co., Chicago. Used by permission.

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A Church Prayer

Father, I thank thee for thy day.
Bless all who come to church, I pray,
Bless him who speaks thy word to me,
Help me to hear and follow thee.

Prayer in the Class. As has been stated before, the desire to worship in some way may arise at other times than during the worship service. The superintendent who has vision will always feel the emotion present in the group at such a time and provide an opportunity for its expression. Much more frequently the longing to turn to God in prayer will be manifested in the class group if the teacher is a wholesome, spiritually minded Christian. To fail to take advantage of such an opportunity would be to deprive the children of one of the most effective means for strengthening and enriching the prayer life. In this small group, if the feeling is intense, individual children will offer short prayers without any self-consciousness and be helped by the experience. Some classes have been greatly helped by writing a composite prayer for class use; each child writing what he or she thinks would be appropriate, and then all the members uniting to select from these prayers what they consider the best sentences to use in their class prayer.

Assignment

Talk with at least two parents of children under twelve concerning their method of dealing with this all-important subject.

If you are working with juniors, be ready to tell in

class what you have done to help them in their prayer life.

What is the difference between faith in God and faith in prayer? A junior girl talking with an adult friend said, "I know that God answers prayer because I asked him every day when we were on our long auto trip this summer not to let us have an accident, and we did not have any during the whole time." What would have happened to that child's faith if there had been an accident? What would you have said to help her?

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

James Bissett Pratt—*The Religious Consciousness.*

Chapter XV, "Prayer and Private Worship."

Weigle and Tweedy—*Training the Devotional Life.*

Chapter II, "Teaching Children to Pray in the Home."

Harry Emerson Fosdick—*The Meaning of Prayer.*

Kennedy and Meyer—*The Training of the Devotional Life.*

Chapter IV, "The Value of Prayer."

CHAPTER VIII

PRAYER IN THE JUNIOR SERVICE OF WORSHIP

FORE-EXERCISE

WHAT do you remember of the prayers in Sunday-school when you were a junior—that is, what impression did they make upon you? Did they seem vital and real in content? Were you able to make them your own as you listened? If not what was the trouble with them?

Do you listen to the pastoral prayer in the church service? If so, do you find that it meets your needs? If not, is the fault to be found in the subject matter, in the sameness of the prayers week after week, in the manner in which the prayer is offered, or your absorption in your own affairs? What changes would you make in the prayer for the benefit of all if you had the power to do so?

RESULTS OF FAILING TO CULTIVATE THE PRAYER LIFE

Nominal Christians. Undoubtedly there are in our churches to-day some persons whose spiritual state is much like that of a character in George Eliot's *Adam Bede*, who is described in this way:

"Hetty was one of those numerous people who have had godfathers and godmothers, learned their catechism, been confirmed, and gone to church every Sunday, and yet for any practical result of strength

in life, or trust in death, have never appropriated a single Christian idea or Christian feeling."

One reason why individuals who are nominal Christians and regular attendants upon church services can grow to adult life without ever having laid hold upon the vital truths of religion in a personal way is that they have not been given normal religious experiences during the formative years of life. In the child's spiritual development as well as in his mental and physical growth he requires "the food that is needful for him." The church hymns and responsive services, however fitting they may be for adults, cannot furnish the spiritual pabulum that children require. The child is not able to climb up the difficult way of the long prayer to the heavenly Father's presence. Ordinarily there is nothing that he can grasp and make his own in that petition. In the church service in which Marjorie found so much inspiration (see page 21), the prayer was one of thanksgiving and the theme of the whole service for that day was a concrete and important reason for special gratitude. This the child felt, and she not only entered whole-heartedly into the prayer but through it was inspired to see other reasons for gratitude that had never occurred to her before. But that was an unusual church service with a strong personal appeal such as would grip the emotions of any child. It would rarely happen that any church service would be so nearly on the child's plane. But the Junior Department worship can always be suited to his interests and needs so that through actual worship experiences he may increase in the knowledge of God.

Spasmodic and Selfish Prayer. To read the books written on prayer in the last few years is to discover that insofar as the writers reflect the opinions of Christian people, there is a certain unrest and a feeling that the church is not measuring up to her high privilege in the practice of prayer whether public or private. If this be true, it would seem to indicate that there has been some serious failure on the part of those who have been responsible for the religious education of the children in the home and church. It may help us to avoid their sins of omission if we review briefly what are considered some of the chief shortcomings in the prayer life of to-day. Doctor Fosdick, in his most significant study of this subject, calls attention to a fact that is emphasized in relation to all forms of worship in our first chapter, when he says of prayer, "The culture of prayer, therefore, is not importing an alien but is training a native citizen of the soul."¹ He goes on to say, however, that this very fact accounts for one peril in our use of it. "We let prayer be merely a tendency and, therefore, spasmodic, occasional, untrained. A tragedy is always present in any fine function of human nature that is left undisciplined." He sums the matter up in this way: "Deep in every one of us lies the tendency to pray. If we allow it to remain merely a tendency, it becomes nothing but a selfish, unintelligent, occasional cry of need. But understood and disciplined it reveals possibilities whose limits have never been found." If, as Sabatier has said, "the history of prayer is the history of religion," and if Coleridge

¹ *The Meaning of Prayer*, Harry Emerson Fosdick. Association Press. Used by permission.

does not exaggerate in asserting that "the act of praying is the very highest energy of which the human mind is capable," it certainly behooves those who are training the young to see that the tendency to pray is both understood and disciplined.

Faith in Prayer Rather Than Faith in God. The child is always literal. He lives in the realm of the concrete. His prayers are for the things which he wants. It is right that he should begin there but it is deplorable when a Christian ceases in all other respects to speak, think, and feel as a child, but in his relation to his heavenly Father remains upon the old childish level. The person, whether young or old, whose prayers remain on the low level of his selfish desires has a mistaken but supreme confidence in his own ability to judge what is best, and therefore his faith is in *his prayer*. When the petition is not answered he necessarily loses his belief in prayer, and it is not easy then to lead him to a rational faith in the all-wise and loving God. If any juniors are already in the perilous place of trusting in prayer rather than in God, they are in immediate need of wise guidance. The child spoken of on page 129 who had unbounded faith in her own prayers, was helped toward a trust in the wisdom and love of God by a discussion of the story of Joseph, and some such approach might well be used by junior teachers when talking with their pupils on the subject of prayer or by the superintendent with the whole department.

"Suppose you could have been near by when Joseph was sold to the Egyptian traders and could have followed the caravan as it traveled the rest of that day. If at night you had seen where Joseph was lying and

found a way to set him free and make it possible for him to go back to his home, would you have done it? You would have been delighted to help him in that way, and would have thought it the best possible thing that could be done for him, would you not? He would have been saved from years of slavery and suffering in a strange land, and his father's grief would have been changed into rejoicing. But what would have happened when the famine came?"² A little conversation with the children will bring out the fact that the hard things Joseph had to bear were leading him to the place where he would be able not only to save the Egyptians but to save his own family as well. He could not see what good was to come of it at the time but he knew later and was able to say to his brethren, "God sent me before you to preserve a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance."³

Another story which has helped many children to see one reason why God does not give us all that we ask for is of a baby playing with the watch of a friend who was holding her. She was happy as she listened to its ticking and held the bright gold plaything in her hand. But presently her mother came into the room with a new pair of long bright shears. As the sunlight fell on them the baby pushed away the watch and reached out for the shears. What did her mother do? Was she not cruel when she refused to give what the baby wanted so much? The children can easily see the reason for the refusal, and can also get from the illustration a suggestion that

² Suggested by a story in *Christmas in a Palace*, Edward Everett Hale. Funk and Wagnalls.

³ Genesis 45. 7.

will help them to understand why the heavenly Father has to answer "no" to many of our requests.

ENLARGING THE SCOPE OF THE PRAYER LIFE

Bringing the Child into Accord With God's Will. Through the prayer service in the Junior Department the children should be given a continually enlarging experience in prayer. They will at first unquestionably pray, if they really pray at all, for pleasant weather for their outings, and for other favors which would involve trying to get God to adjust things to their desires. It is the province of the junior teacher and superintendent to lead the child up to a higher plane in his thought and practice of prayer. "Since the world is governed in the interests of all God's children, it is not seemly or right for any one of them to claim a monopoly of his favor, and ask him to change his arrangements to meet his individual desires and needs. Upon this point Dr. G. Campbell Morgan has the following suggestive story: A thoughtful boy, when his mother prayed for good weather for a picnic, said: 'Mother, I don't think you ought to ask God for a good day. Perhaps it would be a great deal better for the farmers to have it wet, and why should it be fine just for one outing? Why don't you, rather, ask God to help you choose one of his fine days?' This in a nutshell is the philosophy of prayer for weather, and for prayer for temporal things in general. The end of all such praying is not to get God to adjust things to our desires, but to bring ourselves into adjustment with his plans; it is not to alter God's laws but to bring ourselves into harmony with them. By prayer we enter

into the will of God and accept it without murmuring or disputing.”⁴

Prayers That Are Vital. One of the points at which the prayer life of the church fails is in the fact that the congregation finds the pastoral prayers so often forms of words in which the spirit is lacking. In the liturgical churches the phrases of the prayers which are used every Sunday become mere verbiage, signifying nothing, unless the heart of the worshiper is in accord with the petitions he is voicing; and the pastoral prayer of the free-church service will be quite as empty of meaning for the worshipers unless they are in sympathy with it.

If the child has been taught in the home simply to say prayers, his repetition of the familiar phrases is as vain as any that the heathen use. The training of the child should keep him away from all formalism and always in the place where he talks to his heavenly Father from the heart. But this must be done in the home if it is to be done most effectively. The Sunday school may make a very definite contribution, however, by supplementing the individual experience of prayer with a group experience that is just as real and vital as any individual prayer can be, and this larger fellowship in prayer is something that the home cannot give. If in the case of some of the children there has never been any guidance in the home that has made possible reality in prayer, the Junior Department service may give them an experience of talking with God through which they will realize the joy and privilege of such communion, and

⁴ *The Place of Prayer in the Christian Religion*, James M. Campbell. The Methodist Book Concern. Used by permission.

will be drawn away from the mere formality of saying prayers.

Providing a Fitting Atmosphere for Prayer. The thoughts of children are volatile, darting from one subject to another with lightning-like rapidity. The immediate environment is a large factor in deciding what the range of ideas will be at any given time. Juniors have not yet reached the altitude of the saint who is always "in the spirit on the Lord's Day," or of one who can truthfully say that he "prays without ceasing." As has been said, prayer is not an alien growth in their souls, but there are so many other things that have taken root there, both weeds and flowers, that in some way room must be made in order that the prayer life may have a chance to develop in beauty and strength.

As in all other parts of the worship service there must be freedom from interruptions and distraction, and leader and teachers must be genuinely reverent. Comfort, beauty, order, neatness in the room, all contribute to the creation of an atmosphere for prayer. These are things to be thought of and planned for by the superintendent. But the most important duty that is involved in the office is that of preparation for the prayer service. The children cannot truly pray unless the subject of the prayer is something that either now is or can in some way be made of immediate interest to them. It is usually in the prayer that the well-planned worship service finds its climax. It, therefore, is the duty of the leader to arrange the service with such skill that it progresses steadily upward to the point where all hearts are joined in a direct address to God. Dean Sperry

says that the public practice of prayer of many ministers is imperfect "because they so constantly think of themselves as sent from God to the people, and so seldom conceive themselves as going to God for the people. The natural result of such a conception of their ministry is that they spend ten or twelve hours a week on their sermons and never give five consecutive minutes' thought to their pastoral prayers."⁵

Taking Time to Prepare for the Prayer Service. It is to be feared that in Sunday schools generally and in Junior Departments also, much more time is given to the choice of hymns and Scripture, the story to be told or the picture to be shown than is ever devoted to the preparation of the prayer service. A Sunday-school leader visiting a Junior Department was asked for criticisms. She spoke of the fact that the only prayer was a lifeless repetition of the Lord's Prayer, called attention to the constant use of the prayer in the public schools, and deplored its use in the Junior Department as a rote repetition of words whose depth of meaning was not in the least apprehended. The superintendent, in surprise and apparent consternation, exclaimed, "But if I do not do that, what can I do?" A brief prayer was worded for her which had been suggested to the visitor by the rest of the service, and she saw at once how such a prayer of praise and thanksgiving would have furnished a needed outlet for the emotions she had aroused through song, story, and Scripture. The leader who realizes the power of prayer, and the tremendous responsibility as well as the privilege of

⁵ *Reality in Worship*, Willard L. Sperry. The Macmillan Company. Used by permission.

leading the children into communion with God, will never rely upon the chance inspiration of the moment to suggest what her method of approach to the throne of grace shall be.

Wording the Prayer. When the subject has been decided upon, the language in which the prayer is to be worded is still to be considered, and this should receive most careful study. There is a vocabulary for prayer, and the children's religious needs cannot be fully met until they have acquired the ability to express themselves easily in the types of phrases that most naturally voice the highest desires and emotions. This must not be taken to assume that cant words and phrases are necessary or desirable in prayer. It means only that the language used should be free from "weight of adornment" and go directly to the heart of the matter.

Dean Sperry has made a study of liturgical prayers and finds in them a common quality. "Save for an occasional predicate the adjective is almost wanting. The verb and noun give to the ideas quality and movement." In fourteen prayers he found a trifle over seven per cent of the words were adjectives. If the adjective "all" is taken out, which is used more frequently than any other, the proportion is five per cent and of this two per cent are used in ascriptions such as "almighty, holy, merciful, heavenly," so that only three per cent of the words employed in these prayers are descriptive and predicate adjectives. The Lord's Prayer has in it, in the Matthew text, sixty-five words. Leaving out the possessive forms thou, thine, our, there is only one descriptive adjective in the prayer, "daily." In the arrangement of the clauses and

sentences the verb is prominent, "hallow, give, forgive, lead, deliver."

"The literary strength of liturgical prayer lies in two facts, the relative absence of the adjective and the prominence of the verb."⁶

"*Almighty* God, unto whom *all* hearts are open, *all* desires known, and from whom *no* secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee and worthily magnify thy *holy* name. Through Jesus Christ our Lord."

This prayer has been in use for more than thirteen centuries, and doubtless Christians for centuries yet to come will find satisfaction for their souls' desires in repeating it. Aside from the two ascriptions and the word "*all*" there is but one adjective in it.

These facts cannot fail to be of value to the junior superintendent as a guide in preparing the prayers through which the children are to be led into fellowship with the heavenly Father. Remembering that "the adjective always retards thought, and, when multiplied, adjectives arrest the thought altogether," we should use them sparingly. As between the verbs and the nouns, the verbs naturally tend to stand first and the nouns last in the clauses. "The prayer marches, verb-noun, verb-noun."

Another characteristic of the great prayers of Christendom is their brevity, and they are usually upon only one subject. Here again the junior superintendent finds a plain path in which to walk. Any prayer for juniors must be short and concentrated

⁶ *Reality in Worship*, Willard L. Sperry. The Macmillan Company. Used by permission.

upon one thought like the prayer quoted above, if they are to follow it in thought and profit by it.

The Silent Prayer. If there is to be a silent prayer for what shall the children be asked to pray? Will it be better on this particular Sunday to give a subject to the children preceding the moment of silence, or to ask after the heads are bowed that they pray in their hearts, and then lead them in their silent prayer by suggesting subdivisions of what is in reality one topic? In one department where this second method was used on a certain Sunday the children were asked to pray for the pastor of the church, and then after a few seconds of silence for the missionary supported by the church who was working far away across the sea, and then for the other missionary at work in a hard mountain field in the South. Children cannot, at will, change the subject of their prayer easily, but in this case it did not seem like a change of subject to pray for the three ministers of the church, and there was a distinct advantage in having each one prayed for personally instead of preceding the prayer by a request that the children pray for all three.

After having used the silent prayer for some time, suggesting each Sunday the subject of the prayer, it is well to vary the method by letting the children say what the object of the prayer shall be. They are deeply interested in persons, especially those whom they are helping in any way. In a Junior Department near New York they had chosen to send their special Christmas offering to a Seamen's Mission and the superintendent of the department had asked that a report be sent of what was done with the money. About the middle of December that year there was

a violent hurricane in the West Indies and a boy living alone in a hut on the shore of San Lucia was blown out to sea. He swam to an uprooted tree and in its branches was carried ninety miles from shore where he was seen by the watch on an American vessel and rescued. This boy was found shivering, lonely and discouraged, on the deck of the ship at the pier in New York the day before Christmas by the worker from the mission and was fully clothed and given a New Testament in Spanish with the junior money. The worker also took the boy's picture and sent it to the department which had given the money. It can easily be imagined how interested the children were. A few Sundays later when asked, "What would you like to talk with God about in the silent prayer?" the department answered as with one voice, "Our boy in San Lucia."

In another department no subject was given by the superintendent, but after the prayer she said to the children that she would like to know for what they prayed. Nine tenths of them mentioned people. One prayed for his grandmother because it was her birthday, another for an aunt who was ill. Some remembered their class teacher or the superintendent. The remaining tenth had given thanks in one form or another. This shows how strong is the interest in persons, for the great majority of the subjects suggested by the superintendent had been either praise or thanksgiving for blessings which she feared the children would take for granted.

The practice of praying silently is a valuable preparation for life, since heart prayer has a much larger place in Christian experience than oral prayer. If

the children can be trained to turn instinctively without any spoken word, but with earnest thought, to the God who hears the desires of our hearts, they will be mightily strengthened to meet and conquer temptations.

The Sentence Prayer. There is much to be said for the frequent use of a prayer carefully prepared which is given sentence by sentence by the leader and repeated by pupils and teachers. If the leader is offering a prayer in which the children are not expected to join, they may or may not listen to the words that are being said, but if they are to repeat the phrases, they must listen or fail to do their part. Experience has shown that the group responds in this form of prayer by an almost complete participation. It gives a sense of fellowship and co-operation in the prayer which is seldom as pronounced when the children are only listeners. It helps to enrich the vocabulary for prayer and, therefore, gives an outlet for emotions and purposes which, denied such expression, lose their power to strengthen the life and actually become a liability instead of an asset. In a Junior Department where such a sentence prayer was used almost every Sunday a mother came to the superintendent and asked, "How did you teach my boy to pray?"

Surprised by the question, Miss Merriweather replied: "I did not know that I had taught him. Your boy came into the department only four months ago from the primary room. How did you know he had learned to pray?"

Then the mother told how the boy, under temptation, had taken money from her purse and spent it.

When she and his father talked with him about it as lovingly as they knew how, he said nothing and seemed sullen, but finally crossing the room he knelt beside a chair and talked aloud to his heavenly Father, asking him for forgiveness and promising not to do anything of that kind again.

"I was astonished as I listened," said the mother. "I had never heard my child use such words before as the ones that fell from his lips in that prayer. We had not taught him to pray in that way, or, indeed, in any way except to recite 'Now I lay me' and the Lord's Prayer. So I made up my mind you must be teaching him, and I want to know what you are doing."

Investigation showed that the teacher of the class had not touched upon the subject of prayer with the children, so it was evident that the help had come entirely from the service of worship. Miss Merriweather explained about the use of the sentence prayer and the mother said: "Well, I am coming to attend your session if you will let me. I think it will help me in my own prayer life."

Prayer Songs. Many times when the words of a short prayer are set to a beautiful melody the effect of the prayer is much greater than it would be if the words were simply spoken. Take as an example the prayer song by George Whelpton, "Hear our prayer, O Lord, Hear our prayer, O Lord, Incline thine ear to us and grant us thy peace. Amen."⁷ When this is sung at the close of a spoken or silent prayer the influence of the music is almost indescribable. It

⁷ *Services and Songs for Use in the Junior Department of the Church School*, Josephine L. Baldwin, p. 57.

was used by a leader called in to assist in a Junior Department for a time, one part of his work being to conduct the worship. "The 'opening exercises,' as they call them in that department, are a travesty," he was told by a friend, "and the prayer seems blasphemous because of the disorder in the room." The third Sunday that the new leader had charge of the worship the person who had used such discouraging terms in describing the department chanced to be in the back of the room as the prayer song mentioned above was started. What he heard was a melody so softly sung that it seemed hardly more than a breath and yet everyone was singing, and the reverence manifested by the group fairly gripped him as he listened. He said that his friend had performed a miracle, but his part had been only to provide a medium which not only made possible an expression of reverence but tended to arouse the feelings upon which reverence is based.

The prayer song has an advantage over the spoken word in the fact that the words are sung much more slowly than they would be spoken and there is, therefore, time for the sentiment, re-enforced by the melody, to make an impression upon the hearts of those who sing. The chief uses of the prayer song as distinguished from the prayer hymn are as responses,⁸ as a variation for the spoken offering prayer,⁹ and at the close of a spoken or silent prayer.

The Closing Sentence of the Prayer. What shall this sentence be? In most adult petitions the phrase used is, "In his name we ask it," or something equivalent to that. A group of forty theological students

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

were discussing prayer as it is related to the religious training of children. They had been asked by the instructor to write on certain assigned subjects prayers which they thought would be suitable for children to use. Every one ended the prayer with "For Jesus' sake" or some similar phrase. At the end of the next session a paper containing these questions was given to the students:

1. Do you use the phrase "In his name we ask it" or "For Jesus' sake" when you pray?

2. If so, what do you mean when you say those words?

3. Is it possible that you use the phrase because the prayer seems abrupt without it?

4. Would you use it with children?

The answer to the first question was a unanimous affirmative. The answers to the second varied widely. Two or three indicated that the writers considered that the use of the phrase would make more certain an affirmative answer to the prayer. The majority gave as a reason the fact that Jesus told his followers to ask in his name. Only one referred to the fact that the words really mean, "I am asking this in the same *spirit* in which Jesus prayed and worked."

The next session was given over to a discussion of these questions and answers and the conclusion reached was that juniors who were taught to use any of these phrases, if they thought about the meaning at all, would be likely to conclude that it was a sort of magical formula which would help to bring the answer desired. Several of the members of the class owned that they had thought little about the significance of the words and that the phrase had been

used more because it satisfied a sense of euphony than because of its exact meaning.

Leading into the Prayer Service. Even though the worship service up to the time of the prayer has been most reverent and has elicited the general participation of the children, one cannot ordinarily carry them over into the prayer service by simply saying, "Let us pray," or even by naming the subject of the silent prayer. Some sort of introduction is required in order to make it certain that all are united in a desire to pray. Like the prayer itself, such an introduction must be brief and full of meaning. Sometimes it will take the form of a reminder of a picnic or some other good time that the children have had together. In one department where it was the practice for the children to give a good time to some other less fortunate group whenever the church gave them an outing, they had given a picnic and trolley ride to over a hundred children from a kindergarten in a poverty-stricken section of the city. The next Sunday they had a double reason for thanksgiving in the pleasure they had enjoyed and in that which they were able to give. The introduction to the prayer was the story of the way in which the kindergarten children, after asking the driver if they might do so, patted the old horse that had brought the ice cream up the hill, thanking him as enthusiastically as if he could understand, and swarmed about the wagon to say to the driver, "Thank you, Mr. Man, for bringing us the ice cream." The *thanksgiving* which had preceded the *thanksgiving* and the example of the little children helped to make the prayer that day very real and heartfelt.

But there are many general occasions for gratitude which can be brought to the attention of the children when no special reason is at hand; the sunshine, the rain, the snow, flowers, fruits and other manifestations of God's goodness in nature; the blessings of home and school and church. Then there are subjects that help to establish a world fellowship in the hearts of the children; prayers for the children of other lands and those of other races who are living in this land. The range of appropriate subjects is as broad as the world. The only limitation is found when the answer to either of these two questions must be "No." Is the subject one that will help to broaden the spiritual vision of the children? Are they interested already, or can I arouse their genuine interest in the subject?

SHALL JUNIORS LEAD IN PRAYER?

There are some superintendents of juniors who advocate having the children pray before the department usually in brief sentence prayers but occasionally in a longer petition. But in general, workers with juniors do not consider it wise to ask the children to take part in the junior service in this way. The junior children in most cases have not yet learned the rudiments of the practice of prayer. How, then, can they lead others? It will take all of the junior years to put heart and meaning and reality into the prayer life of the children and this must come first. They are self-conscious, painfully so at times, and could not really pray before others. In any attempt to do so their thoughts would be fully centered upon themselves and not upon the Deity

whom they were addressing. It would be perfectly easy to have junior children memorize prayers and say them, but that would be merely a recitation, and such a practice would help to cultivate in them the habit of using empty phrases instead of praying from the heart. When we ourselves have no interest in protestations of friendship or in complimentary phrases that we know are not sincere, how can we think that the God of truth will accept ascriptions of praise or hear and answer petitions that have no soul in them? "In God's sight thoughts are things, desires, deeds, purposes, performances."¹⁰ He does not need the halting speech of the child who loves him to know what is in the heart. He can hear when the lips are dumb, but he hears no word when the heart is dumb though the speech be never so eloquent. Our task and privilege is to cultivate in the hearts of our children a desire to talk with their heavenly Father and so to lead them that they will have the experience of expressing their thoughts and feelings in a normal, childlike way in private and group prayers.

Assignment

Write out three prayers that you would think suitable to use in a Junior Department, making one a prayer of thanksgiving for some special thing, one a prayer for the church and its work, and the third for help in right doing.

The juniors were gathered in the social rooms of the church for a supper to be followed by games and a general good time. They were naturally in rolick-

¹⁰ Robert R. Meredith.

ing mood as they gathered about the table. The superintendent said afterward, "I suppose I should have asked a blessing or called upon someone else to do so, but it seemed out of place somehow, so I didn't do it." Would it have been out of place? What must have been the effect upon the children of omitting it? Write a blessing such as you think would have been appropriate for an occasion of that kind.

Choose some subject that you think would be appropriate for a service of worship. Decide the subject for the silent prayer. Write the spoken prayer and criticize it in the light of what has been said in this chapter. Take the whole program to class with you.

Objection has been made sometimes to the sentence prayer on the ground that it is encouraging a mere parrotlike repetition on the part of the children. Is this criticism valid? Which is likely to be more meaningless, a constantly repeated rote prayer or a sentence prayer which is different every Sunday, and which is prepared by the superintendent with the needs of the children in mind? Give reasons for your answer. Which is better and why, a prayer offered by the superintendent to which the children listen, or that same prayer given in phrases which are repeated by children and teachers? Illustrate from experience if possible.

Subject for Discussion

Is it wise to teach juniors to use "For Jesus' sake" or "In the name of Jesus we ask it" or any similar phrase when they pray?

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

Marie Coles Powell—*Junior Method in the Church School.*

Chapter XII, "The Elements of a Service of Worship."

Weigle and Tweedy—*Training the Devotional Life.*

Chapter III, "Training Children to Pray; in the School."

Kennedy and Meyer—*The Training of the Devotional Life.*

Chapter X, "Training in Worship in Childhood."

T. Grigg-Smith—*The Child's Knowledge of God.*

Chapter V, "Religion and Life." A comprehensive chapter dealing with many phases of the subject, but having several pages devoted to prayers composed and written by children in connection with their church-school teaching or reported to their teachers.

CHAPTER IX

GIVING AS AN ACT OF WORSHIP

FORE-EXERCISE

"IN the offering worship finds a fitting climax. The other parts of the service furnish an opportunity for the praise, prayer, and adoration of each individual to find adequate expression, but in the offering service we are raised to the place of co-workers and partners with God, and so this service comes to have a supreme value." Do you believe this?

Have you realized the significance of the offering service in your experience as a church member? If not, was the trouble with the offering service or with your attitude toward it?

Do you think that you might have been so trained in the junior years that you would have had a joyous sense of working with God as you made your offering week after week? If so, how could this have been done? If you were so trained, what were the elements in that training?

THE PURPOSE IN CHURCH SCHOOL OFFERINGS

One aim of the church school is to enrich the spiritual lives of children and youth. Through the offering it does this by furnishing an expressional outlet for the emotions of love and good will. Money is needed to carry on God's work in the world, but that is not a primary reason for asking contributions from the members of a school of religion. At-

tention here is centered first of all upon what the act of giving will do for the person who makes the offering and not upon what the money can do for the kingdom of Christ in the world. So the purpose of the offering is to "make channels for love where it may freely flow," to prevent the self-centered life of the child from becoming selfish, to enable the child to experience the greater blessedness of giving.

DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF TRAINING

Self-Support. One reason why the offering has not been the means of grace that it should have been in the past is found in the conditions under which most of the church schools had to do their work. In the great majority of cases the offerings given by the members of the school have all been turned into the school treasury. That is, the school has supported itself and in some cases has contributed something to the support of the church. It is as true of a child in a school of religion as it is of a child in a home that if he has to support himself and even contribute to the support of his elders, he cannot get an adequate education. In one such school the writer heard the superintendent of a Primary Department urge the children to bring their money every week, saying, by way of incentive, "You know you want these nice cards and papers that you get every Sunday, but we cannot buy them unless you bring your pennies regularly." The only result from such a plan is to teach systematic selfishness rather than generosity, and the more intelligent the pupil is concerning the purpose of the gift the more certain it is that his life will be narrowed rather than broadened by

the act of giving. In most schools the leaders, being ashamed to urge the selfish appeal, have said nothing about the purpose of the offering and in some cases the children have drawn their own conclusions. Two mothers were talking one day in the presence of a child belonging to one of them about the poverty of a certain worker in the Sunday school.

"She must be very poor," said one of the mothers. "She has worn that same dress four years to my certain knowledge."

"Why has she done that?" asked the child in great surprise. "I have taken my money every Sunday."

In churches where the missionary offering is taken once a month the purpose of the gifts upon that day is generally mentioned. Sometimes the program has a missionary theme and occasionally a story is told. When these things are done it is a step in the right direction but it emphasizes only one phase of the many enterprises of the church and is, therefore, inadequate. The inevitable pronouncement against such a system must be "This ought ye to have done and not to have left the other undone." In addition to being a plan that works injustice to the child because it hampers his religious growth, it is a shortsighted financial policy on the part of the church.

Persistence of Wrong Methods. For many years the most widely used offering song was "Hear the Pennies Dropping." The words were hardly above the plane of doggerel. The music was no better, and to these defects it added the inexcusable error of associating gifts to the Lord with the smallest coin of the realm. It is not to be wondered at that treasurers have complained of the number of pennies in

the church offerings. "Train up a child to give a cent and when he is old he will not depart from it." Another mistake was made when the gifts were called a *collection*, putting emphasis upon the efforts of teachers and treasurers to gather the money, rather than upon the act of the children in making a free-will offering.

When a child has no knowledge of the use to which the money that is given to him to take to Sunday school is to be devoted and, therefore, no interest in seeing that it gets to its proper destination, it sometimes becomes a very real temptation to him. On the way to the school, if he lives in a city or town, he will pass slot machines that yield chewing gum or candy at the bidding of a cent or a nickel. There are often open candy stores to lure him with their wares. Thousands of children have been tempted in these and other ways beyond their power to resist. An effectual safeguard is found in a pledge and envelope system which also leads the giver to assume responsibility for regular, systematic contributions in a specific amount and so helps to establish a valuable habit. If the child fails to bring his offering, questions may be asked that would be invidious if there had been no pledge, and through the questions the child may be prevented from forming a habit of dishonesty and deceit. When such a plan was inaugurated in one Junior Department the reasons for having a pledge were explained to the parents by letter. A mother upon whom the superintendent called the next week said, "Yes, I can see that the regularity is good, and that the church needs to know at the beginning of the year how much it has to rely upon

in the way of contributions. As for guarding the child, I realize that in many cases that would be necessary, and I would be willing to do what you ask for that reason alone, though my boy would never have the slightest temptation to take money from his envelope. He has an ample allowance." And yet her boy was the first one to take the money from his envelope after the system had been inaugurated, and he confessed when asked about it that he had been using his Sunday-school money in that way occasionally for some time. Both he and a child from one of the very poor families of the church who was similarly tempted made up the money from their own allowance or earnings, and what might have become a serious defect in character was avoided. The strongest safeguard, however, is in so motivating the offering that the child would rather give to the cause he has become interested in than to spend the money for himself.

Another grievous error is to use competition in an effort to increase the size of the offerings. When this is done classes are pitted against one another in an unholy rivalry. A prize or banner is offered for the individual or class contributing the largest amount. This plan is both unwise and unrighteous. It encourages divisive competition instead of wholesome co-operation. Often the members of the class that wins in the contest have made very little self-sacrifice in their giving. They have had a teacher perhaps who could afford to give freely and does so, not because of interest in the work of the church so much as because of a determination to have his class succeed in outdoing the others. Or the members of the class are

able to earn extra money easily or to solicit goodly amounts from their parents, while other classes could not possibly get the money to give, however hard they might try. An even greater wrong is done to individual children when the amount of the offering is emphasized rather than the spirit and regularity of the giving. One cent a week is a much larger offering for some children than a dollar a week would be for others. Nothing could more truly defeat the purpose that underlies all true Christian giving or arouse more effectually such un-Christian emotions as jealousy, envy, and resentment in the hearts of children who know that they have failed through no fault of their own but because the contest was unfair. The only suitable formula over such an offering would be something like this: "As of old the Pharisees endeavored to outdo each other in the size of their gifts and made a display of their offerings before the throngs in the Temple, so have we vied with each other as we have tried to win the prize. Those of us who have won have our reward. The money we bring to thee."

Any method which puts emphasis upon the size of the gift instead of upon the spirit in which it is made dishonors our Lord, who said of the widow's offering of two mites, "She has cast in more than all the others." It also defeats its own ends, for after that one effort the incentive is gone and the amount of the regular offering sinks below its former level.

EFFECTIVE TRAINING IN GIVING

Making the Children Financial Partners in the Church. The supervisor of the Elementary Depart-

ments in a city church had been trying for several years to persuade the governing body of the church to put the expenses of the Sunday school into the church budget in order that the members of the school might give to all the enterprises of the church and be made intelligent concerning what the church was doing and why money was needed. She appeared before the trustees and other august groups and explained that the church could not possibly lose and would be almost certain to gain by the transfer of both expenses and receipts to the church treasury. At last permission was given to try the plan for a year, and the supervisor with the heads of the Primary and Junior Departments worked out a schedule through which the children in each group might be informed concerning the work of the church in the measure of their ability to understand.

In the Junior Department it was decided to take on two Sundays of the month five minutes to explain some detail of the work of the local church for which money was needed; another Sunday for one of the benevolent enterprises aside from missions; the fourth Sunday for missions, home and foreign; and on the four fifth Sundays of the year the needs of local philanthropic institutions in which children would naturally be interested and to which they would be called upon to contribute in adult life. In this school the Fresh Air Fund, a children's hospital, a children's day nursery and a crippled children's home were chosen. The offering was made on the Sunday following the presentation of the cause so that those who wished to give more than the amount they had pledged to give each week could do so.

From the beginning a lively interest was manifested and the children showed their utilitarian proclivities by an evident determination to make sure, in the case of all expenditures, that they were getting the worth of their money. Much surprise was manifested when it was found that the pastor was paid a salary, the general supposition being that all he did for the church was to preach on Sunday and that he devoted the rest of his time to earning a livelihood in the marts of trade. A committee was appointed to interview the minister and ask him to tell them some of his duties in connection with the church work, and the committee came back quite staggered by the number of regular and special calls on the minister's time. The report to the department was enlightening, and each child became an interested supporter to the extent of his ability, wishing to help to make it certain that the money due the pastor should be fully paid. When they had discussed the lighting and heating of the church and had found from the printed budget how much these things cost they were noticeably more careful about turning out the lights when leaving a room and exhibited an interest in all the property of the church and a personal responsibility for its care which was entirely new in their experience.

Another result of the plan was the coming true of the supervisor's prophecy, for she told the church authorities that she was certain that the offerings of her departments would double as soon as the children were informed about the work of the church and realized that they could have a real part in it. The offerings were more than doubled the first month and

showed a steady increase through the year. One Sunday the children were told how new Sunday schools were established by the denomination to which their church belonged and how provision was made for helping those new Sunday schools to grow by giving them their lesson books and papers and other things that they needed until they were able to pay for them. The superintendent of the department had told of a little school in which she taught while on her vacation. It was held in a country schoolhouse. Three years later she visited the same place and found a little church built across the road from the schoolhouse. A church of forty members had grown from the little Sunday school that had only twenty in the beginning. The children were intensely interested and their offering was three times what they had been in the habit of giving. Three weeks later a boy came in and asked breathlessly if it was too late to give to the little Sunday school. He had been absent because of illness and was most happy when he found his offering was in time. When the superintendent opened the little paper in which the money was carefully wrapped she found seven cents. But who will say that the gift of self-denial from the loving heart of a child was small in the sight of the Master?

It is evident that children cannot worship through their gifts unless they have an adequate background of definite knowledge concerning the purpose for which their offering is to be used. Through information concerning the need which their money will help to meet, the emotions of the children are aroused and their gifts are inspired by a religious motive. With

such offerings worship becomes not simply possible but inevitable. The givers become conscious that they are partners with God, and to talk with him about the gifts they have brought is a delight and satisfaction. Without knowledge of the need the offering cannot be motivated, and a service over it would be a mockery.

Intelligent Enthusiastic Contributors. In Miss Street's Junior Department every child was pledged to give a certain amount each Sunday, and before the amount on the pledge were the two words "at least." This was to make room for a time when teachers and children alike might wish to add to their regular gift because of a deep interest in some special object. In this way the child was guarded from temptation to misappropriate his offering and the offering itself was made stable with an irreducible minimum, but allowed full freedom as far as the maximum was concerned. Every child knew exactly what was being done with the money, and had a personal interest in the projects for which money was being spent. On one Sunday an older class gave a representation of the governing body of the church considering the budget for the year. Two of the members of the class had been allowed to sit in a regular meeting of the board when the budget was being considered, and they wrote the dramatic representation which was later given in the Junior Department. For this they chose from the discussion of the evening to which they had listened the things that interested them most, which were also, naturally, the things of most interest to other juniors. In this and other ways the children were kept in-

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formed of the enterprises of the church both local and world-wide. Another time three members of the graduation class were asked to plan an offering service. They tackled this commission both gladly and seriously. Three weeks later the following program was issued in which every item of the method of procedure was the children's own.

Two boys and girls had been chosen as ushers and carefully drilled in the performance of their duties. For that Sunday they took the place of the class treasurers and passed the offering plates as the children had seen it done in the church service. Some verses, new to the department, had been chosen and of these the members of the class had made enough copies so that each person might have one.

ORDER OF SERVICE

1. Soft music on the piano while the ushers take places in the back of the room.

2. When the "Amen" chords are played all stand and hum the music softly while Sophie, Janet, and Mary (*three girls with especially fine voices*) sing:

"O Lord of heaven and earth and sea,
To thee all praise and glory be:
How shall we show our love to thee,
Who givest all?"

"Dear Lord, with grateful hearts to thee
We bring our pledge of loyalty,
Ourselves, our gifts, thine all to be
Who givest all."

3. All sit while offering is taken, the pianist playing softly.

4. The ushers march to the front and stand holding the offering during the responsive service.

5. *Leader:* From whom do all our good gifts come?

Response: Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father.

Leader: What has God told us to do?

Response: Freely as you have received, freely give.

Leader: How much shall we give?

Response: Every man shall give as he is able.

Leader: In what spirit shall we give?

Response: God loves a cheerful giver.

6. Prayer by the superintendent for God's blessing on the offering.

7. The object to which the offering for next Sunday will be given explained by Richard Havel, president of the graduating class group.

Richard had informed himself thoroughly and gave a discussion of the work being done in a hospital in China, which was both inspiring and illuminating.

In reporting the success of this experiment, Miss Street said: "I learned more in listening to that service than I would in a year's planning by myself. I will never again be at a loss in trying to vary the service. If I turn the planning over to the children, the service is certain to be different and interesting and not a whit less religious than the ones I plan myself."

The Place of the Offering in the Day's Program. It is desirable ordinarily to have two worship services in the Junior Department program, the opening service, from ten to fifteen minutes long, and the offering service, about five minutes. One reason for having the two instead of including both in one is that

children tire quickly when on the high emotional plane to which a genuine worship service always leads. It is an advantage, too, to have the offering service immediately preceding the lesson, as it produces the atmosphere in which instruction can best be given.

Special Offerings. It had been the custom in a finely organized Junior Department to have a reverent and impressive offering service each Sunday. The week before Christmas the platform was gay with dolls, stockings, toys, and other gifts for the needy. The superintendent thanked the members of the department for their gifts and spoke of the joy that the dolls and toys would give to children who would otherwise have had nothing to make Christmas a happy time. After the offering service a girl raised her hand to ask, "Don't we give *those things* [pointing to the collection on the platform] to Him?"

"Why, yes, of course, we do," answered the surprised superintendent.

"Then why don't we pray about them too?"

"We will," said the leader and the children's offering was dedicated in what was probably the most genuinely heartfelt service of the year. From that time on everything that the children contributed or made to help others was given to the Lord in a brief prayer, and the members of the department regarded that service as the climax of their enterprise, and found in it the greatest satisfaction. "And to think," said the superintendent when telling the incident to a fellow worker, "that until a child suggested doing so it had never occurred to me to have a special service for a special offering. I am afraid even the regu-

lar service had become a trifle cold and formal, but since then we have all found a special joy in the dedication of our offerings to the Giver of all good gifts."

In another church a group of juniors had been attempting to worship in a large, bare auditorium. The new director of religious education chose for them a smaller room which had once been a chapel but was not then in use. It was thoroughly cleaned and painted gray. Then the department was moved into it. The task of beautifying the place was left to the children. They discussed furnishings, and each bit of decoration was presented at a worship service. One day a class of girls brought the rose-colored curtains for the windows. They were presented and laid on the altar rail and received with prayer and hymn just as the offerings were each Sunday. Having been thus dedicated they were put in place later in the week. Even the new hymn books came that way, a small number being bought and paid for by a single class and presented in a service of worship. The room was more truly theirs because it grew with them during those weeks and there were many more real experiences of worship than this group ever had had before.

Assignment

Have you ever been present when a junior offering service was conducted? If so, did it seem to you to be adequate? Give reasons for your answer. List what you consider to be prerequisites for a genuine service of this kind.

Write an offering service such as you think would

be appropriate for use with juniors. Be prepared to present this in class with reasons for your choice of materials and arrangement. Also be ready to show in what way you have taken the child into account in your planning.

As a class teacher, what have you done to motivate the offering? What more can you do to help the children to be intelligent and cheerful givers?

Discuss in class the plan outlined on pages 157ff. for making the children financial partners in the church.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

Mabel Crews Ringland—*Tested Methods for Juniors*.

Chapter VIII, "The Offering Service."

Burton and Mathews—*Principles and Ideals in the Sunday School*.

Chapter VI, "Sunday-school Benevolence."

CHAPTER X

THE USE OF STORY AND ART IN WORSHIP

FORE-EXERCISE

WHAT is the most spiritually impressive short story you have ever heard or read? What was it in the story that stirred your emotions? Did it influence your conduct or attitudes? If so how?

Is there anything in your church, whether windows, or pictures or wall decorations, which ministers to your religious life? If so, in what way does it impress you—by its beauty or by its message?

Of the religious pictures you have seen which one do you like best? Would it be suitable for use in a junior worship service? Give reasons for your answer.

WORSHIP MOTIVATING CONDUCT

Junior children act all the time and think very little, therefore the religion in which they are interested is a practical matter, finding expression through the hands and the feet and little concerned with theories. For this reason, as we have seen in preceding chapters, materials selected for use in worship, whether for reading, recitation, song, or prayer, must be concrete rather than abstract and must suggest duties rather than creeds. Through the worship experience in the church school we hope that each child will find in the place of religious inspira-

tion a power which will so motivate conduct that the hands will find it easier to perform kindly and helpful deeds and the feet to run more gladly in the ways of righteousness. Everything that enters into the worth-while worship service has this influence. Music is a tremendous power for good if rightly used; but if these emotions float away on the breeze of song, and do not grip the life in any way, the worship service as far as music is concerned has been a failure. The same may be said of every other part of the service. "Everything which we can do to aid our children to translate healthful ideas into action is of highest value. . . . Spontaneous action of the spirit of our teaching . . . and the carrying of it into the whole range of life seem to constitute the greatest problem of all education."¹ Genuine worship helps to solve this problem.

The Value of Stories. The story has a universal appeal. It is often spoken and written about as if it were the special property of children; but if so, this is but another proof that we are all children of a large growth, for people of all ages love stories and find satisfaction in them. They are, however, of special value in the religious education of children because of the fact that the child always puts himself in the place of the hero. He vicariously has the experience of the hero and reacts to this experience as the hero does. In the stories used in religious education good is always victorious in the end, and the child as he responds sympathetically to the various situations in which the individual is tested gains new Christian attitudes, new desires to serve, and

¹ *The Child's Knowledge of God*, F. Grigg-Smith.

finds within himself a new longing to be like the hero who for a time he has seemed to himself to be.

What has been said is true of stories in general, but it also applies to stories as used in connection with worship. A well-chosen story will supplement and intensify all that the worship service is expected to accomplish. It gathers up and puts in vivid form the subject that the service as a whole is intended to emphasize. It brings home to the child in a personal way the truth that lies implicit in service, and helps to give him right motives for conduct. Like worship it induces spontaneous action on the plane of the religious ideal presented, and tends to carry that ideal into the whole range of life.

Creating an Atmosphere. A well-told and appropriate story will never fail to attract and hold attention except under the most adverse circumstances. Sometimes it is used at the beginning of a service both to unite the thought and feeling of the group upon some one subject and to create an atmosphere conducive to worship.

A junior superintendent had been asked by a friend who was conducting a week-day class if she would come on a certain day and tell a missionary story. She consented, and when she arrived fifteen minutes before the time of the session, found the boys and girls playing rough and noisy games and yelling at the top of their voices. "Is it not terrible?" commented the leader of the group. "I simply cannot do anything with them." The visitor, while wondering if these children could possibly be made to wish to listen to her story, turned the leaves of the song-book and found the hymn, "We've a Story to Tell to

the Nations." By the well-worn appearance of the page she decided that the children must know it and thought she might wish to use it at the end of her story.

Just then came the call to order, but the disorder instead of becoming less was, if anything, increased. After several moments of endeavor to quell the mob the leader turned to her friend and asked, "Can you do something to quiet them?"

"I will try." was the response and she took her place on the platform. Seeing a stranger there and one who evidently expected them to be quiet, they gradually settled into their seats and waited to see what would happen next. What did happen was a distinct shock to most of them, for the stranger asked, "How many of you are good guessers?" A few hands were hesitantly raised. "Well, I will give you something to guess. Where was I born?" All hesitancy disappeared at once and the guessing was lively. Most of the countries of Europe were mentioned, especially those from which the mothers and fathers of some of the group had emigrated. Not one hit upon the right country in spite of effort and interest, but by the time the speaker thought it best to tell that it was China she had perfect attention. She knew it would not continue very long if she were to turn the group over to the superintendent for the worship service, so she began to tell the story which she had expected to give later in the program. It was about an experience which her father and some other missionaries had had when they were traveling up the Min River to visit inland villages and towns where the gospel had not been preached. It was the

story of the rescue of a baby girl who had been set adrift in a large earthen jar by her mother. The mother had been ordered by the father to throw the unwanted girl baby into the river. This she could not bear to do and so compromised between her natural affection for the baby and her knowledge that she was expected to obey her husband's commands. The story of how the cries of the baby were heard by the missionaries, of the oarsmen's reluctance to turn the boat when ordered to do so, and the final success of the missionaries who were trying to find the child, held everyone in the room spellbound. The story ended happily, for the baby was taken back to Foochow and was cared for by the missionaries till she was old enough to go to school and after her graduation married a native missionary and became herself a messenger of the gospel of Jesus to her people.

The speaker linked up the rescue of the baby with the contributions of boys and girls and men and women many years ago which made it possible for the missionaries who saved the life of the baby to be in China at that time. She added that thousands of lives are being saved now in China through the work done in hospitals with their trained nurses, missionaries, and doctors, and that the money they were giving there that day would help to make these things possible. That seemed an appropriate time for the reception of the offering, and as this was done it was evident that the children were experiencing a sense of joy in giving which the leader said was new in her experience with them. After the offering prayer the song "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations" was

sung with appreciation. During the prayer that followed every head was reverently bowed and the leader, who was so eager to help the children under her care, breathed a heartfelt prayer of thanksgiving for a worship service which was not such in name only but in deed and in truth.

On this occasion nothing was or could have been done as those in charge had planned to do it. But the service as it developed was most effective, and everything that was accomplished that afternoon was made possible by the story which aroused intense interest and served to bring all hearts into tune with the missionary spirit.

The Conduct Story. "*Any working of the feelings without opportunity to act is likely to result in impairment. It produces a soft sentimentality.*"² In religious education it also results in a condition described as "gospel-hardened." It is exceedingly important, therefore, that the emotions aroused in worship shall find a natural and fitting outlet in deeds, and for this reason stories that induce helpful acts on the part of children through their natural susceptibility are among the most valuable of the types that may be used in the worship service.

On the Sunday before Mother's Day the program was built around the thought of service with special reference to the home, and this story was told:

"What is the matter with you two girls?" asked their older brother George as he overtook Janet and Ruth on their way home from Sunday school. "You look as solemn as owls."

"I should think we would," said Ruth. "Our super-

²Patterson DuBois.

intendent in the junior department told all of us that she wanted us to think of something we could do to make next Sunday a happy day for our mothers and she wants us to tell what we did, but we don't know one thing that we can do."

"Well, now, let's see," said George. "Perhaps I can have a part in it too. How about it?"

"Oh, yes," said the girls both together.

"All right, we will go into the park and talk about it, for mother will be sure not to hear us there." So they made their plans and the next Sunday morning this is what happened:

George had smuggled the alarm clock to his room from the kitchen the night before and kept it under the bed clothes so that it would not awaken his father and mother. It was set for six thirty. As soon as George got up he called the girls, and very quietly the three crept down the back stairs and went to work. George had been in camp the summer before and had learned how to make pancakes and boil eggs and make coffee, so he was the cook, while Ruth and Janet busied themselves setting the table with the best dishes. When they had placed carnations at the other places and a lovely bouquet from their father at their mother's plate they thought the table never looked so pretty. Father was in the secret and he had promised to keep mother upstairs as long as possible, so when she finally hurried down to "get breakfast" she was greeted by three laughing, happy children who escorted her to her seat at the table. She declared several times that the breakfast could not have been better if it had been prepared by the most noted chef in America. When the meal was

over, the children turned their mother back as she started for the kitchen and told her that she was to have nothing to do with washing the dishes. They led her protesting into the living room and seating her in an easy chair told her to read and admire her flowers. But it was not book, paper, or blossoms she was thinking of when she said, "They are the dearest children in the world."

On the Sunday after this story was told the superintendent discovered that an only child in one family had carried out the exact program that the three attempted, and had done it successfully. Many others had been inspired by the story to do helpful things for their mothers, and, in fact, most of the mothers said afterward that it was the happiest Mother's Day they could remember.

The Inspirational Story. It is not possible for all the emotions that are aroused in the worship service to result immediately in conduct. Some will help to develop within the child attitudes toward God and his fellows that are true and righteous and these will eventually influence and motivate his conduct. It is through such stimulation children are helped not simply to do what is right but to act intelligently and from a Christian motive. The story that is inspirational is most effective in motivating conduct because it has in it the power to lead the children to see new values in life and to love that which is highest and best. This type of story could have no better illustration than the following adapted from "The Hall of Heroes":³

³ *The Fascinated Child*, Basil Matthews. Fleming H. Revell Company. Used by permission.

Some one who once had a vision of a Hall of Heroes has told the story of what he saw as I am going to tell it to you.

Suddenly I found myself before a very large building surmounted by a beautiful dome. Wishing to know the purpose of the structure I went up the long flight of steps and asked a man whom I saw standing in the doorway, "Will you please tell me what this building is?"

"This is the Hall of Heroes," he answered graciously. "Would you like to see through?"

"Thank you, very much," I said, and followed him into the magnificent hall, around the inside of which ran a marble staircase leading to the different floors. All was silent and when my guide spoke to me his voice echoed along the hallways and balconies like the soft deep notes of a cathedral organ.

"Here we enshrine," he said, "the memories of all the heroes from the least unto the greatest. Let us go into this room."

I saw before me an open door, and over the door was written "Heroes of Battle." I think that you would be able to tell the names of a great many whom I saw there as I walked slowly down the long aisles of that great chamber, men who had won great victories and men whose defeat had been glorious because they had all their wounds in front.

I would gladly have stayed longer, but my guide led me from the room, and as we mounted the stairs he said, "Those were brave heroes, every one, but some time the nations of the world will learn to live together in peace, and then such sacrifices as those men and women made will no longer be necessary."

As we reached the second floor I saw over the door before me "Heroes of the Lonely Way." Here were the pioneers, men who had cut their way through the jungles of dark continents; who had scaled unconquered mountains, crossed waterless deserts, discovered the sources of rivers, sailed over unknown oceans, and pushed their way along the very tips of the earth. I felt ashamed that I knew so few out of that brave multitude; but I knew Columbus and a few others, and my guide stopped me every now and again, and told me stories of deeds of courage and faith and endurance which have done more for the world than all the conquests of the sword.

Then we ascended another flight of steps, and before us stood a door over which was written "Heroes of Truth." Socrates was there, with the cup of hemlock in his hand; and Luther was there, who defied the Pope; and all the noble army of martyrs were there, from Stephen to Margaret Wilson, who was tied to a stake in Solway Firth and drowned by the rising tide because she refused to deny what she believed to be true.

When we left that glorious chamber we came to the last staircase of all. It was broader than all the others, and was made of something which hushed every footstep into silence. On the steps were the words, "Greater Love Hath No Man Than This, That a Man Lay Down His Life For His Friends." Over the door which opened before us was inscribed, "Heroes of Love." My guide did not enter the room in front of me as he had done each time before, but standing at one side motioned with his hand that I should pass in. I found that the room was the great

dome crowning the building which I had seen from the outside; but it was bigger and higher than I could ever have thought. At first I imagined it was empty, but it was the marvelous light that blinded my eyes. Then, in the very center, I saw a cross, with a man crucified upon it. A name escaped from my lips. "Jesus!" I whispered. As I grew accustomed to the light, I found that the room was not empty; indeed, it was the fullest of all; for the walls seemed to stretch away in the distance and the dome seemed to rise into mist, and all the mighty space was filled. Slowly I began to distinguish faces. I saw David Livingstone, who gave his life for the people of Africa; I saw James Chalmers, who gave his life for the savages of New Guinea; I began to see quite plainly the multitude that cannot be numbered of the Heroes of the Cross. Then I caught a sound of music. It came up from the bottom of the huge building, as if every kind of hero was joining in one chorus. It filled the room in which I stood. I heard the words at last, "Unto him that loved us, and loosed us from our sins: to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever."

I felt I could endure it no longer. I turned and left the room, and ran down the winding staircase with the music ringing in my ears and a great throbbing in my heart. In the hall at the foot of the staircase my guide was waiting for me. He walked with me to the great entrance, and said in the kindest voice, "You will be here some day?"

I stopped in astonishment, "I?" I stammered, "I, a hero?"

"Why not?" he answered, smiling.

I looked into his face.

He seemed to know the great longing in my heart, and with infinite tenderness read and answered my unspoken question. "How can you? It is written, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' I am sure you will be with us some day."

We stood outside the door. He held out his hand to me to say good-by. I thought it had the print of a nail in it. He said, "On which floor would you like us to prepare a place for you?"

I wonder what answer *you* would have given.

When this story is told to juniors by one who appreciates the beauty and feels the spirit of the vision, it rarely fails to elicit an almost unconscious response from the children. When the leader utters the question implied in the last sentence, a response comes like a breath from all parts of the room, "On the top floor."

SUGGESTIONS FOR SELECTION AND METHOD OF USE

Short and Interesting. While good stories inspire the listener and prepare him to participate in worship and also deepen the impression made by the service, they are instruction and not worship material. This makes it necessary that the stories used shall be most carefully selected for their motivating and inspiring power, or the worship period will become in effect a teaching period supplemented by songs, Scripture, and prayer. If the story is not to pre-empt the center of the stage, it must be short, requiring not more than five or at the most ten minutes for the telling. In order to be appropriate for use in wor-

ship it must present a vital quality, such as ideals of loyalty, courage, honesty, trustworthiness, kindness, and love, and present them in an interesting way.

A Genuine Story. It may seem unnecessary to say that it must be *a story* and not a homily or a lecture, and that no moral should be tacked on at the end, and yet an examination of the average story-sermon book will prove that such a suggestion is timely. In one book which has been widely used by many ministers and others there are only sixteen out of the fifty-two selections that are in anything like story form, and every one of these has a moral appended with an emphasis that is irritating and certain to repel the listener from, rather than attract him to the truth. Attention is called to these facts here because story sermons, while not written for use in worship, are generally short, and many superintendents turn to such compilations as sources of supply, for stories to be used in worship.

Not a Set Feature of Program. One of the surest ways to make the story a liability instead of an asset is to determine that there shall be one in every worship service. It would be undesirable always to have a story even if it were feasible. But experience has shown that it is impossible to find an appropriate story of high grade for every Sunday of the year, or for all of the subjects that may appropriately be used for worship. The attempt will inevitably result in the presentation of many stories which are below the level of worship and can contribute nothing to the religious development of the child. Let the compelling power rest in the story and use it only when

it is so good a story and so perfectly adapted to strengthen the program that it cannot be denied admittance.

Stories of High Grade and Successful Outcome. There are many collections of stories on the market which give evidence that the writer or compiler has considered it necessary sometimes to amuse the children and at other times to talk down to them. The latter type always arouses antagonism or disgust in the hearts of juniors. Funny stories, humorous asides, and jokes have their place with children and should have a large place, but never in worship. The children are eager for fun but because they are endowed with an intuitive sense of the eternal fitness of things they feel the incongruity of having a laughable story told in connection with worship, and lose a measure of respect for the one who tells such a story.

Bible stories are valuable when they fit perfectly with the subject of the service and can be made brief enough for use as a part of worship. The good Samaritan is ideal for such use, but there are few that do not need so much of introduction by way of setting and explanation as to defeat the end for which the story is told.

A story for juniors to be inspiring must be a story of success. An adolescent boy or girl might be helped by an account of a rescue from drowning, for instance, in which the rescuer lost his life; but a junior would not. In their thought to die is to be defeated, in a sense, even though the person for whom the life was given was saved. They cannot realize the glory of the sacrifice, except in the death of Jesus. With ordinary people death means failure.

Especially is this true when one person gives his life for one other person. In case many participate in a successful rescue, even though a few may lose their lives, the total effect is of a victorious adventure and there is no dejection to lessen the influence of the story. It is important to avoid making an impression of gloom when the desire is to inspire with the admiration which leads to imitation.

THE VALUE OF PICTURES

Their Suggestive Power. As music appeals through the ear directly to the emotions without the intervention of cumbrous speech, so pictures reach and arouse feeling through the eye. There is an insistence in the message of pictures which simply will not be denied. The story has been told many times of a mother living in an inland city who could not understand why first her eldest and then her second son chose to find their life-work on the ocean. The pastor visiting the family was taken to the room which the two boys had occupied through their boyhood days and on the wall he saw a beautiful picture of a full-rigged ship cutting the waves on a sun-lit sea. "There is the influence," he exclaimed, "that has sent your boys to sea. How could anyone resist that vivid representation of the joy and exhilaration of life at sea with no suggestion of its hardships or dangers?"

The writer once had a boy in her Junior Department who was beset with melancholy. He rarely smiled, was never heard to laugh, and had a look of settled dejection that was impossible to understand in a child of his age and circumstances. His parents

were cultured, Christian people, well to do, and having a beautiful home in a fine residential section of the city.

On her first visit to the home the superintendent was confronted when she entered the parlor by a painting nearly the length of the piano over which it hung, and extending from the top of the piano to the picture rail. It represented a great expanse of stormy sea with a frail raft tossing on the waves in the foreground. On the raft were five men, pallid and gaunt, with an expression of agony on their faces, feebly attempting to light a flare, while in the distance an ocean liner was speeding on its way. One glance at the picture was sufficient to strike the heart of the visitor numb with a feeling of utter despair, and it was easy to see why the susceptible child who lived in the house with it had been unable to resist its oppressive influence.

The Lasting Impression Made by Pictures. "Just as the hearer by imagination and sympathy absorbs the personality of the recited hero, so the looker absorbs the pictured hero. There is this added advantage, however: with the story-picture the imagery produced is sharper than that which is aroused by the words of the story alone. It is therefore more easily recalled and more permanent."⁴

A worker in the field of religious education was talking with a man whose paths through the years had led him far from the restricted life of his rural boyhood home. Their conversation had been chiefly about books and the relative value of the work of this

⁴ *The Use of Art in Religious Education*, Albert Edward Bailey. The Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

or that writer for which a preference was expressed. Then, to the surprise of the Sunday-school teacher, the man of the world said, "I have read all kinds of literature from the tracts which my grandmother made me read on Sunday afternoons during my childhood to the most extreme of the modern problem novels; but the one book that has held its place in my memory tenaciously through all the vicissitudes of my career is a book that rested in solitary grandeur on the center table of the best room in our country home."

"It was a Bible and it had pictures in it," suggested his friend.

"You are quite right," was the reply, "and to this day I can see Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, and scores of other Bible men of iron actually walk through the events of their lives as if on the screen of a moving-picture house. I can remember how I used to steal into the room every time any opportunity came. After shoving back one of the tightly closed shutters I lifted the big book carefully to the floor and, lying face downward before it, I simply reveled in the fascinating details suggested. I would part with almost any other of the literary treasures my memory holds rather than with those splendid Bible stories so photographed upon my mind and heart that they became an integral part of my life."

"Were you interested in the New Testament stories too?"

"Not so much at first, but later they held a place far above the others. I can remember how wonderful it seemed to me that God's Son could be willing to

stop his work to take little children in his arms and bless them."

THE USE OF PICTURES

To Create Atmosphere. The picture may find its place in worship in practically all the ways in which a spoken story may be used. When the children came in one Sunday morning they saw a picture in the front of the room that had not been there before. It was "The Angelus." Gradually the children gathered in quiet groups to study the picture. When the time for the opening of the session came there was an atmosphere of hushed expectancy and reverence that made the worship service which followed memorable in that department.

To Impress Truth. It was the custom in Saint Paul's Junior Department to buy something for the junior room every two or three years. The members of the department had decided that it would be desirable to have another picture and the necessary amount had been raised. Before the picture was purchased several different subjects were borrowed from an art store and from the number the children chose, "Christ the Door of the Fold," by S. C. Parker. The teachers, officers, and children worked together planning a program for unveiling the picture, and probably no other service was so indelibly impressed upon the minds of all who participated in it as that one. The picture was the dominant feature and its message seemed to take possession of every heart. The Scripture used was John 10. 1-16 recited from memory. The hymns were "The King of Love My Shepherd Is," and "Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead

Us." The story of the lost sheep was told and at the close the precentor of the church sang "The Ninety and Nine."

"I love that picture," said a girl standing before it the next Sunday.

"Why?" asked the superintendent.

"Oh, I think it was so kind of him to care when a little lamb was hurt."

There is much of symbolism in the picture, but juniors do not see it. The impression that is made is always of the infinite love of the Son of God, and this is seen more clearly when they think of him as caring for an injured animal than it would be if it were a human being who had been hurt. A teacher who thought she must explain something of the symbolism said to the child who declared her love for the picture, "You know, dear, that really means that he cares for children and is ready to forgive and help them when they have been disobedient."

In amazement the child turned and said, "Why, *of course*, he cares for children!"

No picture will tell the same story to a child that it tells to an adult. But if it has a spiritual message, that he can understand, the child will certainly get some impression from it that will strengthen and enrich his religious life.

"Pictures have not lost their primitive magic quality. They compress within their small compass sometimes an incalculable amount of feeling and of power. And as suggestion calls them up all through later life they liberate within the consciousness sometimes just the dynamic that is necessary to move the will to action, to determine the choice, to give the

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energizing emotion, to open a vista, to start a trend, and so in some degree to shape character.”⁵

No hard-and-fast rule can be laid down for the presentation of a picture. Sometimes it needs a brief explanation, as is the case with “The Angelus.” Any good story picture should be allowed to tell its own story, with hymn, Scripture, and prayer fitting so perfectly with the subject that the whole makes one impression of beauty and power.

SUGGESTIONS ON SELECTING PICTURES

Suitable. The matter of greatest importance is that the picture shall be in accord with some one of the subjects that are appropriate for worship. These subjects will be treated further in Chapter XI. It is sufficient to say here that they are found in God’s relation to his children, in their relation to him, and in the relation of all of God’s children to one another, and to their responsibilities and privileges as co-workers with God. When a picture is to be selected for use in the worship it should be studied carefully to see if it presents an ideal in any one of these relationships. If it does, it may be of use in worship. If it does not, by that fact it is automatically placed outside the pale of consideration.

Adequate in Size. Whatever picture is used must be large enough to be seen clearly by everyone in the room. In one department a frame twenty-five inches by thirty inches inside measurement, with a three-inch mat was used. This frame had a movable back. When a picture was to be presented in the worship

⁵ *The Use of Art in Religious Education*, Albert Edward Bailey. The Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

service it was inserted in the frame and kept hanging in the room for three or four weeks or until some other picture was used. Frequently on the Sunday following the use of the picture an appropriate story about the artist would be given by the superintendent at some time apart from the worship service or by the teachers in class. If some such plan as this is carried out, and the pictures carefully stored when not in use, the department will in time have an inspiring picture collection containing much that will serve to enrich the worship service, and also as a source of supply for the teachers in their class work.

One difficulty in attempting to use pictures in the worship service is that those which are large enough are so expensive as to be prohibitive. Some of the houses which print small pictures that are sold for a cent each also issue some that are twenty-two inches by twenty-eight inches or larger at a reasonable price. In the list of these larger ones such pictures as Raphael's "Sistine Madonna" (detail), Millet's "The Angelus," Ploekhorst's "The Good Shepherd," Watt's "Sir Galahad," Boughton's "Pilgrims Going to Church," and Hofmann's "Christ Blessing Little Children" may be found.⁶

Ideal in Type. It has sometimes been stated that because junior children are interested in reality they like realism in art. This is not by any means true of the average junior. He finds pleasure in the ideal and desires it, especially in relation to representations of Christ.

⁶ Junior Superintendents would find it profitable to procure recent catalogs of the Perry Pictures Co., Malden, Massachusetts, and the G. P. Brown & Co., Beverly, Massachusetts.

In a Junior Department where the children were meeting during the week to illustrate hymns, among the materials for use there was a box containing a large assortment of pictures on the life of Christ. One day the children were asked to sort the pictures and arrange them around a large table in chronological order. When the task was finished several of the children came to the teacher to protest against certain pictures that they found in the box.

"That man calls this Jesus!" said one, his voice vibrant with scorn as he held up a picture.

"Yes, and look at this one!" added another, and so they voiced their disapprobation and even begged the teacher to allow them to destroy the pictures that, in their opinion, dishonored Christ. Nine tenths of these pictures were copies of paintings by Tissot and all were the most realistic pictures in the box.

"Here are the pictures we like best," said Raymond, and these were the head of the boy Christ, from "Christ in the Temple," and the head of the man Christ, taken from "The Rich Young Ruler," both by Hofmann.

"Why do you like these best?" asked the teacher.

"Because they look most like him," was the emphatic reply.

True to Fact. It is highly desirable that the setting and costumes in any picture representing Bible events shall be accurate. In the pictures painted by Harold Copping and those in the "Hole Bible" by William Hole the union of the beautiful and the true is well-nigh perfect. But these are not obtainable in a large enough size for use in a department.

Assignment

List those stories that you think would be suitable for use in a junior worship service. Give in class the subject of the service in which you would use it and tell what you would expect the story to accomplish in the development of that subject. Consult a book of story sermons and select an illustration of "preaching," of "moralizing" and of a story well told. Take these to class for comparison with other lists.

Select a picture such as you would use in a worship service. Show it at different times to a junior boy and a junior girl. Note the reaction of each as shown by comments and questions. Do you think the picture would have been more effective in arousing emotion and influencing conduct if it had been shown to these same two children in company with other children of the Junior Department and as part of the worship service? Why? Be prepared to discuss this question in class.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

Jay S. Stowell—*Story Worship Programs for the Church School.*

Chapter III, "Worship in the Departmentalized School." The writer of this book says: "Those stories and talks are primarily adapted for one-room school or schools where two or more departments meet together for the worship period. They are designed to appeal primarily to juniors and intermediates."

Katherine D. Cather—*Religious Education Through Story Telling.*

Chapter VII, "Technique of Story Telling: Telling the Story," 156-162.

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Margaret W. Eggleston—*The Use of the Story in Religious Education.*

Chapter XVIII, "The Use of Stories in Making Great Pictures and Hymns Live and Grow."

Albert Edward Bailey—*The Use of Art in Religious Education.*

Chapter I, "Art as the Handmaiden of Religion."

Frederica Beard—*Pictures in Religious Education.*

Chapter I, "The Place of Art in Religious Education."

CHAPTER XI

PROGRAM BUILDING

FORE-EXERCISE

HAVE you ever taken part in a worship service which through all the elements contained in it made one clear impression upon your mind? If so, be ready to describe that service in class.

If possible between now and the next session of the class, attend a service of worship in a Junior Department. If you cannot do that, attend some other worship service and answer these questions concerning it: Was it a unified service? If not, how many and what different subjects were touched upon in the hymns, scriptures, and prayers? What impression was made upon you? Remembering the service first mentioned, which made a deeper impression, and why?

APPROPRIATE SUBJECTS FOR WORSHIP SERVICES

As was said in Chapter I the purpose in providing worship services for juniors is to strengthen within them love for God and love for their neighbors so that more and more their deeds shall be such as naturally spring from the motive of love; to help them also to have reverence for holy things and appreciation of the finest traits of character in the measure that is possible for them in their stage of development. If this purpose is to be accomplished, the subjects chosen for the services must be based

upon the great fundamentals of the Christian life: God's relation to us in providing care and guidance, communion, forgiveness, and strength and inspiration for right doing; our relation to God which will ideally be found in reverence, trust, penitence, and the loving desire to talk with God and to do the things that are pleasing to him; our relation to all of God's children, which will involve living with them on terms of good will, sympathy, and friendship, leading to helpfulness and kindness, and to work with them and with God to help to make the world a better place in which to live.

Only the highest attitudes are of sufficient worth to be made the basis of a worship service and whatever is introduced into the service, whether hymn, prayer, Scripture, story, or picture, must measure up to this ideal.

Planning the Program for the Year. As has been suggested in Chapter III the leader of a department will begin her program work by making an outline for the year in which the special days of the church and nation will fix the emphasis at certain points. The next question to be decided is, How can the services leading up to these special days be so planned as to find their natural climax in Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Easter?

If we take the fall Sundays by way of illustration, the services might be developed under subjects such as these. (These sketchy outlines are intended only to show how God's good gifts to the world may be brought into the foreground in the weeks before Thanksgiving in order that the impression made on that day may be more real and lasting.)

For the Sundays of October:

1. *God's World*—Selections from Psalm 104, emphasizing the beauty of the world and of nature and our joy in it.

Hymns—"This is My Father's World."¹

"For the Beauty of the Earth."²

Prayer—Thanksgiving for the world in which God has made everything beautiful in its time.

If it is possible to get a good colored picture of some beautiful scene, it would add to the impressiveness of this service.

2. *God's Care*—Matthew 6. 25-33.

Hymns—"How Strong and Sweet My Father's Care!"³

"God Is Love, His Mercy Brightens."⁴

"God Will Take Care of You."⁵

Story—Showing how God permits us to help him in caring for his birds, animals, and for boys and girls and men and women who need help.

Prayer—Thanksgiving for God's care and asking him to make us quick to see ways in which we may help to care for others.

3. *God's House*—Psalms 122. 1 and 100. 1-5.

Hymns—"When Morning Gilds the Skies," verses 1, 2.⁶

"O Lord, Thy Benediction Give," verses 1, 4.⁷

Prayer—For God's blessing on the church and on

¹ *Hymnal for American Youth*, H. Augustine Smith.

² Most standard hymnals.

³ *Services and Songs for Use in the Junior Department*, Josephine L. Baldwin.

⁴ *Ibid.*, with refrain.

⁵ *Hymnal for American Youth*.

⁶ Church Hymnals.

⁷ *Hymnal for American Youth*.

all that it is trying to do for God in the world.
For the pastor of the church and the teachers
and officers of the Sunday school.

4. *God's Word*—Selections from Psalm 119, the
Junior Motto—James 1. 22a.

Hymns—"The Heavens Declare Thy Glory, Lord,
verses 1, 2, 3.⁸

Story—Of Mary Jones and her Bible and facts
about the marvelous growth of Bible societies
and their work.

Prayer—Centering about the thought of Psalm 119.
11, and James 1. 22a.

5. *God's Day*—Selections from Psalms 118 and
124, Matthew 12. 9-13.

Hymns—"O Day of Rest and Gladness."⁹
"The Earth Is Hushed in Silence," verses
1, 2, 3.¹⁰

Prayer—For help to use all of God's good gifts
aright, but especially the day that he has set
aside from ordinary work and play that we may
have time to learn the things he wants us to
know, and to think of him and of his children,
especially those who are in need of any help that
we can give.

6. *God's Helpers* (a missionary service).

Scripture—Psalm 8. 3-9; Romans 15. 1; 13. 10;
Ecclesiastes 9. 10a.

Hymns—"My Master Was a Worker," verses 1, 3.¹¹
"Forward Through the Ages."¹²

⁸ *Hymns of the Christian Life*, Milton S. Littlefield.

⁹ Church Hymnals.

¹⁰ *Hymnal for American Youth*.

¹¹ *Hymns of the Christian Life*.

¹² *Ibid.*

Prayer—Thanksgiving for the good that has been done by God's workers through the ages, and for the privilege and joy we have of working with God in his world.

7. *God's Provision for the Needs of his Children.*

Scripture—Psalms 103. 1-5; 65. 9-13; 107. 21, 22.

Hymns—"Come, Ye Faithful People, Come."¹³

"For Peace and for Plenty."¹⁴

"Now Sing We a Song for the Harvest."¹⁵

Prayer—Thanksgiving for the harvests that gladden the land and for the joy of sharing these good gifts with others.

Story—The first Thanksgiving Day in New England in 1621, and the way in which the day became a national holiday in 1864.

Planning the Weekly Program. In the weeks that follow Christmas there is opportunity for the leader to choose the subjects of the services without special reference to the subjects that have been used in the immediate past or are to be used in the days to come. At such times the question to be decided is—

What objective have I in planning for this service?

Is it to be found in some event that has happened in the community (see page 48) which has so aroused the emotions of my group that I can best minister to their religious growth by providing a medium for the expression of this emotion?

If there is no such occasion for a special service the question will be—

What one of the fundamental attitudes which reli-

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Services and Songs for Use in the Junior Department.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

gious education is striving to develop in the child shall I choose at this time for emphasis?

Shall it be honesty, truthfulness, fair play, trustworthiness, helpfulness or some other fruit of the Spirit which is appropriate for worship because it is an ideal of God for his children?

Preparing the Service. Let us suppose that Trustworthiness is the subject that has been chosen as best calculated to meet the needs of the children. The leader will first gather together all the material that has a bearing on this subject that is in hand or can be obtained. The sources for this material will naturally be the Bible with a good concordance, or access to a topical Bible, the songbook in use in the department, with other hymn books for reference. Often a single verse of a hymn expresses just the sentiment needed in the responsive service, or as a recitation or reading. Books with services in them suited to juniors may also be suggestive. But nothing in the way of source material can ever take the place of the leader's file or scrapbook—a collection of verses, quotations, songs, Scripture references, pictures, stories, and other items which every worker stumbles upon again and again but which few are wise enough to seize upon and file for future use. Happy the leader who through years of service has gathered a store of such material and arranged it under subjects in such a way that everything in the collection is accessible when needed.

When all the material on the subject for the service has been gathered together, the leader will select from these materials what is needed for this special program, and arrange the parts chosen in logical

order so that each prepares for that which follows and leads toward the climax.

In perhaps a majority of cases the service finds its climax in the prayer, but this is not always the case. It may be a song which expresses most perfectly the emotions of the culminating point of the worship. This is especially true in joyous praise services. Or it may be a verse of Scripture, a story, or the showing of a picture which sums up and intensifies the impression of all that has gone before. It is generally true of a worship service as it is of a story that an ending is needed after the climax to restore the emotional balance, and almost invariably after a story which stirs the emotions profoundly the only fitting ending because the one which best expresses the feeling aroused, is a brief prayer.

In this service on Trustworthiness let us take it for granted that the materials chosen are these:¹⁶

Hymns:

I WOULD BE TRUE

I would be true, for there are those who trust me;
I would be pure, for there are those who care;
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;
I would be brave, for there is much to dare.

I would be friend of all—the foe, the friendless;
I would be giver and forget the gift;
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;
I would look up, and laugh, and love, and lift.¹⁷

¹⁶ The Hymns, Scripture, and prayer are taken from *Songs and Services for Use in the Junior Department of the Church School*.

¹⁷ Howard Arnold Walter.

STAND FAST FOR CHRIST THY SAVIOUR

Stand fast for Christ thy Saviour,
 Stand fast whate'er betide;
 Keep thou the Faith, unstained, unshamed,
 By keeping at his side;
 Be faithful, ever faithful,
 Where'er thy lot be cast
 Stand fast for Christ, stand fast for Christ,
 Stand faithful to the last.

Stand fast for Christ thy Saviour,
 He once stood fast for thee,
 And standeth still, and still shall stand
 For all eternity;
 Be faithful, O be faithful,
 To love so true, so vast;
 Stand fast for Christ, stand fast for Christ,
 Stand faithful to the last.¹⁸ Amen.

Prayer:

Leader: Dear Father, in all the tasks of our daily lives which thou hast committed to us to do,

Response: Help us to be trustworthy.

Leader: In all the hours that thou givest us for study,

Response: Help us to be trustworthy,

Leader: In accepting the good things which thou hast committed to us in our Sunday school.

Response: O Lord, make us trustworthy.

In Concert: Wherever we go, whatever responsibilities we have, may each of us be the sort of person who can be trusted to do what he agrees to do and to guard whatever has been committed to him.

¹⁸ Walter J. Mathams. Used by permission.

Prayer Song:

Hear our prayer, O Lord. Hear our prayer, O Lord
Incline thine ear to us and grant us peace.

Amen.

Scripture:

That good thing which was committed unto thee
guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in
us.

—2 Timothy 1. 14.

Give diligence to present thyself approved unto
God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

—2 Timothy 2. 15a.

And let us not be weary in well-doing.

—Galatians 6. 9a.

It is required in stewards that a man be found
faithful.

—1 Corinthians 4. 2.

He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also
in much.

—Luke 16. 10a.

Story:

WALTER'S TEST

With lagging steps Walter Jackson made his way to the room where the arithmetic examination was to be held. He had not done well during the term and he knew it, and that made him dread the test. He did not like arithmetic, but that was not the whole of the trouble. The teacher of the class always spoke very rapidly and was impatient when the children did not understand what had been said, and she seemed to have a special grudge against Walter because he was naturally rather a slow thinker. However, Walter was not excusing himself at all and was

wishing with all his heart that he had studied harder. He knew that failure would mean that he must go to summer school for six weeks, for his father had said so, and that was not a pleasant thing to look forward to.

When Walter read over the questions he found that his worst fears were realized. There were at least three of the problems that he could not answer at all and only three out of the ten in which he felt sure he could make a passing mark. In the next seat was his best friend, Clifford, but all the other boys and girls had seated themselves on the other side of the room.

"Cliff is a perfect shark at arithmetic," thought Walter, as he saw him busily figuring. "What he sees to like in that study I can't imagine;" and then Walter turned to his paper and began working himself. After a while the teacher was called from the room by an important message requiring her immediate presence at home. As she left she said, "I know I can trust you boys and girls to work without supervision, and am putting you on your honor to do so."

Of course Clifford knew all about Walter's trouble with arithmetic. He also knew that they would lose almost one hundred hours of play together if Walter had to go to summer school, for he had figured it out very carefully. When he had finished one sheet of his work he slid it over onto Walter's desk without saying anything. On it were problems worked out which Walter did not know how to do and if he could only copy those he felt sure he could get a passing mark. He, too, thought of the long hours in

school when Clifford would be free to play, and he was tempted almost beyond his power to resist to take the help offered. But he thought: "I am on my honor. We were all trusted to be honest and I surely don't want to be a cheat." So with a smile he passed the paper back to his friend. There was not much written on the paper that Walter turned in, but it was the best he could do.

When he got home he told his mother that he had failed. He told her too of the help Clifford had tried to give him, and then added: "I thought of what Miss Horton said as she left the room and I wanted to be a boy who could be trusted, but I think what helped me most was the cover of the Boy Ranger Handbook that you bought for me yesterday. I saw that cover as plain as if it was right in front of me with its Indian head and 'Boy Rangers of America, Be Trust-worthy' in big letters, and I made up my mind then that I would rather be somebody who could be trusted to do the square thing than to pass that examination."

Walter's mother kissed him and said, "To have you make a decision like that makes me more glad than I would be to hear that you had passed ten examinations with a mark of one hundred in each."

When Mr. Jackson came home Walter had gone downtown on an errand, and before he came back his father had heard all about the struggle of the morning. When Walter came in he was greeted by his father in the front hall with a hearty,

"My boy, I hear you won out splendidly in the test this morning."

"Well, if you heard that you heard wrong," said

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Walter, gloomily, "I failed absolutely in that arithmetic examination."

"Yes, perhaps you did, but in the greater test you gained a big victory and I am proud of you."

For some reason Walter did not mind going to summer school half as much as he thought he would, and at the end his mark in the arithmetic examination was ninety-five.

Arranging the Program. Examining the elements of this service we find in the Scripture commands, exhortations, and statements regarding faithfulness to a trust. One of the hymns is a stirring call to faithfulness and the other expresses a desire to be true to a trust. The story pictures an ideal of trustworthiness. The prayer asks for help in the endeavor to be faithful and true. Our purpose is through this material to arouse certain emotions and to give these emotions an adequate medium for expression and to lead the children to the God of love from whom they may receive power to enable them to strive toward the ideal. With this purpose in mind the logical order for the service would be:

1. *The Call to Be Trustworthy.*

In concert—2 Timothy 2. 15a.

Hymn—"Stand Fast for Christ."

Responsive Reading—2 Timothy 1. 14; Galatians 6. 9a; Corinthians 4. 2; Luke 16. 10a.

2. *The Presentation of an Ideal.*

The Story—"Walter's Test."

In essential particulars this is a true story of the way in which a boy proved himself to be trustworthy. It will naturally arouse in the children a desire to

be like Walter in this respect. The hymn gives them an opportunity to express that wish and so deepens the impression, and the prayer leads them to the only source of help in the struggle for righteousness.

3. *Voicing a Desire to Reach Toward the Ideal.*

Hymn—"I Would Be True."

4. *An Appeal for Help to Attain the Ideal.*

Prayer.

Preceding the service as outlined here there would be a "Song of Worship Without Words," which might be the music of a hymn such as Pilot ("Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me"), or Marion (Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart), or Penitence (Purer Yet and Purer).

Proving the Program. After a program has been carefully prepared for a service of worship it should be scrutinized in detail with some such questions as these in mind: Is this program based upon some one of the great fundamentals of the Christian life?

Are all the selections chosen for the service such as junior children can be interested in, profit by, and understand?

Are the hymns sufficiently familiar so that the children will not be prevented from worshiping as they sing, because of mechanical difficulties which have not yet been overcome by practice?

If the several items of the service pass this test, it would be well for the leader to go through the service just as it is to be used, playing the music, singing the songs, reading the responsive selections; then it will be possible to answer these questions concerning it:

Will this service make one clear impression upon

the minds of the boys and girls? If so, is that the impression that I desire to make? Is the impression religious, that is, will this service help to stimulate worthy conduct and put the religious motive back of it, or will it tend to develop or strengthen a Christian attitude in the hearts of the children?

Another important question is this:

Is this service as beautiful as it can be made?

In the place where we bring the children into the very presence of God we must use nothing less than the most beautiful selections that can be found in order that those whom we are set to guide may experience the deepest joy in the service and be led into a greater appreciation of beauty in song and literature. "Heat cannot be separated from fire, or beauty from the eternal." (Dante.)

Assignment

Select a subject for a worship service. Gather together material for it. Select what you need and arrange the material in logical order so that the service will make the impression you desire and lead up to a climax. Make enough copies of this service if possible for all the members of the class and take them to class for discussion and criticism.

Take a worship service from any book of services prepared for juniors and criticize it in the light of what has been said in this chapter.

Take some service in the *Hymnal for American Youth* which is not intended for juniors and designate the parts of the service that you think might well be used with juniors and the parts that you

think unsuited to them, giving the reason for your decision.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

Mary Alice Jones—*Training Juniors in Worship*.

Chapter II, "Building a Worship Program."

NOTE: Some programs are given in the appendix.

Edna M. Crandall—*Curriculum of Worship for the Junior Church School*. Volumes I and II.

In these books, intended for the use of teachers, much is made of the memory curriculum and programs are outlined for the church-school year. Volume I contains some material that is better suited to intermediates than juniors. Volume II (which does not presuppose the material of Volume I) has in it an abundance of help on the teaching of hymns, the use of pictures and suggested forms of prayer.

Josephine L. Baldwin—*Services and Songs for Use in the Junior Department of the Church School*.

A collection of fifty-two programs with additional special services and hymns in the back.

H. H. Hartshorne—*Worship in the Sunday School*.

Chapter VII, "An Experiment in Sunday-school Worship."

Calvin W. Laufer—*Junior Church School Hymnal*.

This book, issued by the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education in Philadelphia, in teachers and pupils editions, contains Graded Hymns, Anthems, Worship Programs, Prayers, Religious Poetry and Hymn Annotations.

CHAPTER XII

PREPARATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN CHURCH WORSHIP

FORE-EXERCISE

OF the church buildings in which you have worshiped which seemed to you most beautiful and churchly? Analyze for yourself the elements of beauty that you found there. How could these elements be transferred to a junior room so that it would be both beautiful and suggestive of reverence?

What impression was made upon you by the rites of the church when you were of the junior age?

As you recall your experience as a junior attendant upon adult services of worship what do you find that would help you in an effort to make the juniors of to-day both more intelligent concerning, and more at ease in the church service?

MATERIALS OF WORSHIP AND RITES OF THE CHURCH

Every time a child takes part with interest and comprehension in a junior worship service he is gaining a familiarity with materials of worship and with methods of procedure that cannot fail to make him feel a measure of ease in the general congregation of the church. But there are many elements peculiar to the services which are planned for adults that are not found in those intended for boys and girls of the junior age. It follows, therefore, that if

we wish the children to feel at home in the church, we must give them sufficient information to clear their minds of that insistent, "I wonder why" which, when it is present, occupies the thinking so effectually as to negate the influence which the service might otherwise exert.

The Church Hymnal. It is the exceptional child who becomes familiar with the hymnal of his church through its use in the home. There are some who learn to know and love the church book of worship amid the delightful associations of home life, and thrice happy are they of whom this is true. In one family known to the writer it was the custom, while the children were growing up, to spend what they called the "Happy Sunday Hour" together just before twilight. Each member of the family, from the youngest to the oldest, planned the service in turn, the littlest child by telling what she would like to have sung and read or told as a story. The book used was the church hymnal, and the children learned not only to know but to love many of the great hymns found between its covers. One of the daughters went to China as a missionary, and writing home from that strange land she said: "I have had an opportunity to look back upon the years that are past since I have been here and have been able to see them more clearly and to evaluate my experiences as I could not when I was in the midst of it all. When I watch the panorama of the years I see so many happy memories and reasons for gratitude, but one stands out above all the others and that is our 'Happy Sunday Hour.' I would not surrender that memory for all the money that wealth would give."

To a child with such a home the hymnal is a familiar book, bright with happy memories of experiences that imbued many of its hymns with meaning and power.

But a large number of our pupils come from homes where the flame of the religious life is burning low. Many of these parents are nominal Christians but there are hosts of others who have no connection with the church themselves, but seem to desire the contact with religion that comes through having their children attend the Sunday school. For the children who come from such homes the hymnal is an unknown and uninteresting book, and if they find themselves in a church service, they are like a person at sea without pilot or compass. They cannot find hymns or responsive readings readily, and have an uncomfortable feeling of not knowing what is coming next or even when one should stand up or sit down. But we want our children to go to church and we are anxious that they shall enjoy the experience so that they may form the habit of church attendance. If this is to come to pass, we must give them a definite preparation beyond what is accomplished through the graded and adapted worship of the Junior Department.

In one church the Junior Department meets before the church session for their period of instruction. They then go into the church as a department and are present for the organ voluntary, the opening sentence, a short invocation, the first hymn, the Apostles' Creed, and instrumental selection by organ, violin, and 'cello or a vocal solo; the responsive service from the Psalms followed by the Gloria, the second Scripture lesson and the first verse of the second hymn.

At first the children were restless during the time they were in the church. All the adult worshipers knew the opening sentence that was sung but they did not. It was in the hymnal but there was no indication given in the calendar concerning the place where it could be found. Many of them had never heard of the Gloria or the Apostles' Creed and did not know where to find the responsive services for the day in the Psalter. But gradually, as the teachers guided them in the use of the hymnal, they began to take pleasure in finding the places and in reading and singing with the congregation. They all took their Bibles into the church and found and followed the reading of the New Testament passage with evident satisfaction. Soon they were transformed from bored listeners or restless disturbers of the peace into interested worshipers. In the Psalter on one Sunday this sentence occurred, "He counteth the number of the stars, he calleth them all by their names." A boy standing beside his teacher read the words and then, looking up into her face with an expression of wonder and awe, half whistled and half ejaculated, "Whew!" That may seem a strange way to worship, yet that boy at that moment experienced an awakening to the marvel of God's power and wisdom and responded by what, for him, was a very natural as well as real tribute of praise.

In churches where the juniors do not attend the church service the superintendent and teachers might arrange for a weekday meeting of the children for the purpose of making a trip of exploration through the hymnal, the trip to be followed by a social hour. There could be a contest in finding hymns, the num-

bers being given and the children asked to rise as soon as the hymn is found. Before starting the contest they should be asked to note in the index whether they are to look for the page or for the number of the hymn. The numbers given should be those of hymns that the children already know if possible, so that they will realize at once that they have a point of contact with the book. Have them turn to the Psalter to ascertain how the readings are indicated, whether by Sundays of the year as First, Fifth, Twenty-sixth, etc., or by the numbers of the Psalm. Give them time to look over the Psalter and find a psalm that they know, having them stand as soon as one is discovered. Call upon each one to recite one or two verses of the psalm. Have them think of the first line of a hymn that they like best and then look in the index to see if it is in the hymnal. In the case of any which are there, call for the name of the writer of the words and then for the name of the composer of the music, explaining where each name is to be found in case they do not know. Then have them look up the names of each in the index of writers and the index of composers to find the dates. Ask them to look at one other hymn by the same writer and another tune by the same composer if there is more than one in each case. Have them find the section where the Christmas hymns are given and select one which they would like to sing. Let them sing others if they wish to do so, calling attention to the meaning of the words and the name of author and composer as before. It is easy to make such an exploration party intensely interesting to the children and after such an experience they will doubtless wish to

learn more concerning the book and will not be reluctant to attempt to use it in church.

The Sacraments of the Church. In some church hymnals certain litanies, rituals, and liturgical services are given in addition to the hymns and the Psalter. These services should not be touched upon in any exploration of the hymn book such as is suggested above. If the children ask questions about that part of the book, it will be sufficient to tell them that there is much more in the hymnal than could be discovered in any one day and that certain of the services are so important that each must be explained by itself.

In some of our churches the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the one to which the attention of the children is most frequently called. In the church referred to above where the juniors attend the first part of the church service each week, a ten-year-old boy, seeing the preparation that had been made for the communion service, asked his teacher, "What are those white cloths there for?"

"Because it is communion Sunday," she answered.

"What do the people in the church do on that Sunday?" was the next and very natural question.

The celebration of the communion is so interwoven with the very warp and woof of the Christian religion that it is of the first importance that the children shall know what the great memorial is and how it is celebrated in the church and what it means. This information can be given by the class teachers or the junior superintendent as may be thought best, preferably on one of the days when the communion is celebrated in the church.

Baptism is another rite which the children frequently see celebrated, and in order that it may not be to them simply a spectacle they must be told of the depth of meaning that is bound up in the act of being baptized. The interpretation of the rite as well as the method of administration varies widely in different denominations, but the belief regarding the rite that is held by the denomination to which the church belongs should be explained to children of the junior age in order that they may see in it an act of dedication to the Lord and the expression of a desire to be made clean from all things that are displeasing to him.

The Reception of Members. In many denominations it is expected that toward the end of the junior period the children will come into conscious relations with Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Leader and will unite with the church. Whether this is true in your church or not, any child who attends the church service is likely to be present when members are received. If he is told what leads people to wish to belong to the church, how glad they are to stand before the congregation and by that act proclaim their love for Jesus and their desire to help to do his work in the world, the service will mean much more to him and may help to arouse in his heart the first impulse toward a wish to join the great company of church members with all that act implies. Before the junior unites with the church he will be given special instruction concerning what is involved in church membership and what it means to a Christian; but that does not make unnecessary the explanation of the meaning of the rite as seen in the church service. The

less the children are mystified by what they see and hear in God's house, the more likely they are to be at ease in Zion in a perfectly legitimate and most desirable way. Undisturbed by vain speculations they can enjoy the parts of the service that they understand and will gain something from the spirit of the whole which will stir religious thought and feeling.

ECCLESIASTICAL DECORATIONS

Windows. The pastor of a church in which it was the custom to have a children's service and sermon every Sunday based his talks to the children for several weeks upon the windows of the church in each of which a Bible event was pictured. The children were fascinated and at the conclusion of the series begged him to give it all over again. Even the grown people were impressed and interested and one expressed the thought of many when she said: "It is strange how much more those windows mean to me now. I thought of them before much as I did of the walls, just as a necessary part of the building. Now each one has its own message." When there are "storied windows richly dight," the attention of the children should be called to them and the stories that bring the message told.

Wall Designs. Some churches unfortunately have nothing either in their windows or their decorations which would differentiate them from a town hall. Of these Dean Sperry says, "The chill and numbing sense of unreality which we get when we enter so many churches springs from the riot of meaningless patterns which have neither historic warrant nor

symbolic worth. Few of us who have ever spent idle hours during interminable church services studying the monotonous vagaries of dull mechanical patterns stenciled on a wall or set in glass will assert that here is beauty authentic and altogether lovely and here is a religious idea adequately intimated in art. Polygons or red and blue glass seem to say, 'I believe in Euclid,' and a wearisome stencil along the border of a wall seems to say, 'I believe in the plenary inspiration of the local decorator.' The plain truth is that half the decoration in American churches means nothing and never can mean anything."¹ Happily there are some churches where, in the decorations of the walls and especially of the chancel, there is much that is suggestive. Frequently the Greek letters Alpha and Omega, $\text{A}\Omega$, are used and juniors are delighted to discover that instead of being simply a design that someone thought would look well in that place the letters have a meaning. They will be eager to read in Revelation 22. 13 what Jesus is represented as saying of himself, and will see how the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet speak to Christians of him who is "the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

Sometimes the letters IHS or JHS are found in the designs interwoven around a cross, and almost always they are seen on the marker for the pulpit Bible. A junior girl asked her father what these letters meant and he, being in haste at the time, answered, "They stand for some Latin words and refer to Jesus." As she sat in church Sunday after Sunday she thought

¹ *Reality in Worship*, Willard L. Sperry. The Macmillan Company. Used by permission.

more about those letters than about anything that was going on around her. She knew nothing of Latin and decided that the letters must mean, "I have suffered," and in her adult life has repeatedly said that those words come to her mind whenever she sees the three letters, though she long ago studied Latin and knows that *In Hoc Salus* means "In this (cross) is salvation," and that the more common interpretation of the letters is *Jesu Hominum Salvator*, "Jesus the Saviour of men."

Many children are familiar with monograms such as are used on letter paper and in other ways. When they see this design  in the church they are glad to know it is the monogram of Christ made of the first letters of the Greek words for "Christ" and "King."

One can never tell just what will make an impression upon the mind of a child. The little girl who thought that the sky was the floor of heaven and that the stars were holes in the floor put there by the heavenly Father so that some of the light and glory of the heavenly home might shine through, found an exquisite delight and comfort in that belief. It gave her a confident trust in the loving care of God as she fancied that he and his angels, looking through the star places, kept loving watch over the earth the whole night through. She suffered a keen disappointment when too early for her soul's good some overzealous instructor blotted out for her the floor of heaven and the glory of it and, unknowingly, sent God away from her into the far unapproachable reaches of space. Then one day she attended a service in a church where the recess back of the pulpit

was painted to represent an evening sky with stars shining in it. She fairly held her breath when she caught sight of it. She looked upon the starry sky painted in that sacred place as a confirmation of her most comforting theory and returned to the enjoyment of it, dismissing from her mind as untrue the statements of the teacher which she had never wished to believe. The form of her belief was wrong, as both theology and astronomy abundantly testify, but the substance of it was gloriously true, for the God enthroned in the heaven of her imagination was a God of infinite love.

The child who has been carefully prepared for participation in church worship is familiar with the church auditorium, appreciates the beauty in its decorations and windows, and knows the significance of the more easily understood ecclesiastical symbols. Therefore, when he enters the building he feels at home in his Father's house. The sacraments and special ceremonies of the church are not confusing rites to him because he comprehends their meaning and purpose. The hymnal is a pleasant and readily followed guide for worship. He has been given an experience of worship adapted to his understanding and needs, which has created pleasurable associations with the act, and has made him sufficiently familiar with the usages of such services to prepare him, at least in a measure, for co-operation with any worshiping group. For such a child the stumbling-blocks which have impeded the progress of many juniors along the path of worship have been taken out of the way, and it has been made easy for him to become a worshiper in deed and in truth.

CONCLUSION

At the close of such a study as we have made of the materials and methods of worship it may be well to summarize briefly the results that might naturally be expected from appropriate worship experiences during the junior years.

Appreciations. A realization of the privilege of companionship with God; love for the beauty of the literature and poetry of Scripture and hymns, an understanding of what are true values in conduct, love for good music, an admiration for the nobility of the life of Jesus Christ, arousing a desire to be like him, a new realization of the wisdom of God's laws and their effectiveness in the life of the boys and girls who obey them—these are some of the lines along which the juniors learn through worship to see and appreciate the highest and best elements in life.

Attitudes. In every genuine worship service God is consciously recognized as one of the group. In his presence life takes on new aspects. The children inevitably acquire new attitudes—reverence toward God, a feeling of dependence and gratitude, an obedient spirit, love, and a sense of comradeship, and loyalty to and love for Jesus Christ as Leader, Friend, and Exemplar.

Conduct Outcomes. The inspiration given in the place of worship reaches out into the everyday and tends to make the worshiper more faithful in the discharge of all his duties. "The experience of worship itself with its elevation of idea and feeling, its contemplation of the best in life, is a state of mind which

is pregnant with fresh effort in new directions. New levels of moral control are attained. New ideas are grasped and new causes espoused. The will of the individual, perhaps weak and ineffective by itself, is re-enforced by the purposes of others."²

When the offering is a definite act of worship a desire is aroused to have a part in God's work in the world. Service is seen as a means of expressing love for God and for his children. Thus all giving is vitalized and each child enters into conscious partnership with God. Emotions having a religious value are powerful in motivating and controlling conduct.

The Social Impulse. Worship is essentially a social act, involving fellowship with others on the highest possible plane, and as such it motivates social conduct by creating and strengthening feelings of good will, sympathy, and friendliness.

Since worship requires the exercise of thought, feeling, and will, each member of the worshipping group is co-operating with the other members with the whole of his personality. This ideal unity engendered in the worship service induces a spirit of co-operation that will be felt in all the work of the department and may be expected to influence the children in their other social contacts.

Assignments

Examine your own church auditorium and see what there is in it that should be explained to a child. How would you go about helping a child to become acquainted with a church auditorium?

² *Worship in the Sunday School*, Hugh Hartshorne. Teachers College Press. Used by permission.

When you have your plan thoroughly wrought out take two or three juniors into the church, and after telling the story of a window or of something else that has significance, encourage the children to ask questions about anything that they do not understand. Report to the class what you have done and the reactions of the children.

How would you explain the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper to juniors?

Write and take to class any experiences you have had which show that through worship in department or class the children have gained new appreciations, right attitudes, social impulses, and conduct which gives evidence of greater moral control and religious motivation.

SUGGESTION FOR ADDITIONAL READING

Willard L. Sperry—*Reality In Worship*.
Chapter XI, "Reality in Worship."

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Baldwin, J.L.

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5/7/55		
5-14-55		
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